



DRAGON+

**D&D LIVE
2020: NEW
STORYLINE
REVEALED!**

**COMIC-BOOK CHAT:
Dan Abnett
& Jim Zub**

**April Prime
talks Snowy
Owlbears &
Ol' Bitey!**

DUNGEONS & DRAGONS®

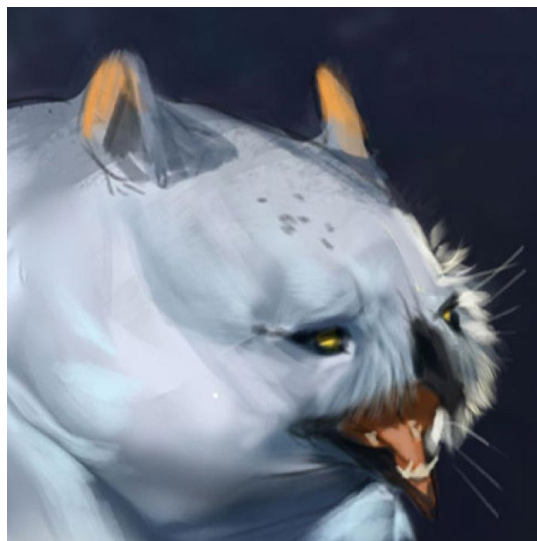
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ISSUE 32



Welcome to Dragon+ Issue 32

A heartfelt message on behalf of
the D&D and Dragon+ Teams.
Stay safe everyone.



Imagining the Ampersand: April Prime

Artist April Prime plots the
journey from concept to
commissioned art in the latest
D&D storyline.



D&D Live 2020:



Streaming

Roll w/Advantage

Dungeons & Dragons fans braved an icy virtual world to experience an adventure best served cold.

Highlights

D&D Live 2020: Roll w/Advantage casts its icy spell over this month's livestreams.

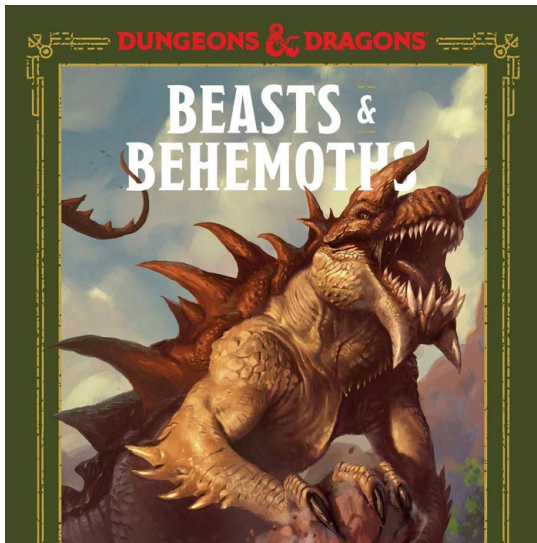


In the Works

Continue our tour of the hot new products coming soon to a tabletop near you...

The Write Stuff: Dan Abnett

An image of a tabletop strewn with old-school D&D material helps explain how Dan Abnett became the writer he is today. Dragon+ went behind the photo to find out more.



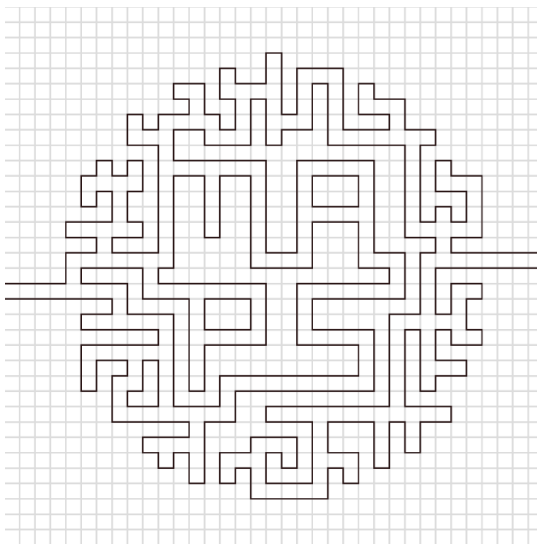
Young Adventurer's Guides: Beasts & Behemoths

The beasts are unleashed in the latest D&D guide aimed at younger adventurers.



Unearthed Arcana: Subclasses Revisited

Sharing new playtest possibilities for the rogue, warlock, and wizard.



Maps of the Month: Mythic Odysseys of Theros, Acquisitions Incorporated, The



D&D Classics

We start our adventure drinking at an inn (as is so often the case), before proceeding to the ruins of a tower spanning the earliest

Green Dragon Inn

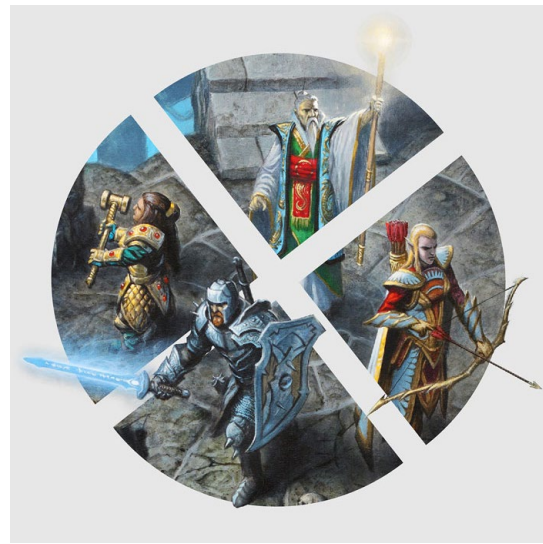
Coinciding with D&D Live 2020: Roll w/ Initiative, we explore more in-game entertaining spaces—including an amphitheater fit for the gods, and a gambling den run by the undead!

editions of the game!



The Best of the Dungeon Masters Guild

Party of one? We seek out the best tools and scenarios to play D&D solo.



Playing D&D Remotely: Virtual Tabletop Software

Showcasing the best learning resources to help you get the most out of Fantasy Grounds and Roll20.



Next Issue: Dragon+ 33

Guest editor Hal Howard joins our windswept trek!

A big thank you to Greg Tito and everyone involved with the creation of this issue.

DRAGON+ 32

Welcome to Dragon+ Issue 32

A heartfelt message on behalf of the D&D and Dragon+ Teams. Stay safe everyone.

Greg Tito



Dear *Dragon+* readers,

We were lucky to roll a pair of twenty-sided dice and take the higher one for this year's annual D&D event. *D&D Live 2020: Roll w/ Advantage* needed all the help it could get in making its debut this year!

Not only do we have a pandemic occurring for which we pivoted to a digital event, but there is unrest in the global community as society struggles with the reality of systemic racism. We want to recognize what's happening in the world while also providing a space

for the community to find something to be excited about in a situation that honestly feels terribly bleak most of the time.

All this weighs heavily on my heart. I have made it a big part of my work at D&D to make sure that Black creators and players feel welcome in our community. I don't want to list anything specific here, but there is one single point I'd like to drive home for everyone reading this message—it takes substantial work to push against

systemic racism and make change happen. That work **must** be done by all of us, not just the Black spokespeople you might see on a streaming D&D show.

Just as your character might work to earn enough experience points or justify the story reward from your Dungeon Master in order to gain a level, so too must we all work hard to create a safe environment for Black people to enjoy the same hobby of telling fantastic stories together.

I am proud of the work the entire Wizards of the Coast team put forth in order to make *D&D Live 2020* a memorable experience for Dungeons & Dragons fans around the world. We learned about the frozen landscape we'll be exploring in *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* from Chris Perkins and raised money through your donations to Red Nose Day. We came together as a global community by playing D&D Adventurers League online sessions all weekend long, previewing what's happening in the region. We voted to keep our favorite of the ten characters portrayed by members of the D&D Community in Reality RP and worked together to uncover who the cultist was who burned the food silos in Ten-Towns. And we were entertained by the most star-studded group of performers ever assembled to play D&D on a live stream program.

Finally, we listened to the Black members of our community as they discussed their experiences in the TRPG and what we can do to make it a more positive environment fostering the creative storytelling we all love.

That was the spirit of *D&D Live 2020: Roll w/ Advantage*. The advantage we all possess is when this community comes together to slay the monsters attacking our people. Let's gather the party, donate to **Red Nose Day**, and earn some freaking experience points by working to end racism.

Thank you,

Greg Tito

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ADVENTURE IS A DISH BEST SERVED COLD



LEARN MORE AT [DND.WIZARDS.COM](https://dnd.wizards.com)



Imagining the Ampersand: April Prime

Artist April Prime plots the journey from concept to commissioned art in the latest D&D storyline.

Matt Chapman

“it’s such a natural progression,” says April Prime, a concept artist on the upcoming Dungeons & Dragons storyline *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*, when we ask how the snowy owlbear on our cover was brought to life. And as she explains such an obvious artistic flourish, we can’t quite believe this is the first time one has been drawn. “I love owlbears and there are snowy owls and there are polar bears, so of course there’s a snowy owlbear!”

“The snowy owlbear came out of a conversation when April visited our offices,” remembers D&D Principal Narrative Designer Chris

Perkins. “We hadn’t decided if it would appear in the storyline until we saw her concept art. At that point we knew we had to find a place for this lovable, huggable creature.”



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As obviously cute as the idea of a snowy owlbear is, the development of the concept didn’t end there. April’s research showed that there was a difference between males and females when it came to polar bears and snowy owls, and she was determined to reflect that in her art.

“They’re the opposite. Male polar bears are a lot bigger and heavier than the females, while female birds of prey are larger and stronger than the males because they’re the ones who have to produce eggs and look after the chicks. It was all about finding a balance between that,” she explains.

“It’s the female snowy owls you see with the dramatic black and white feathers. It’s subtle but I made the male snowy owlbears almost completely white. Male snowy owls go out to hunt while the females guard their nests on the tundra ice.”

April was asked to provide a single piece of art as she expanded on the snowy owlbear concept but actually created five or six drawings that included anatomical explorations and different poses: “I drew one image of it standing up on its rear legs because bears have a freakishly human anatomy. If you study the way a bear’s muscles sit, you can see they’re very similar. Or maybe we’re like bears; I try not

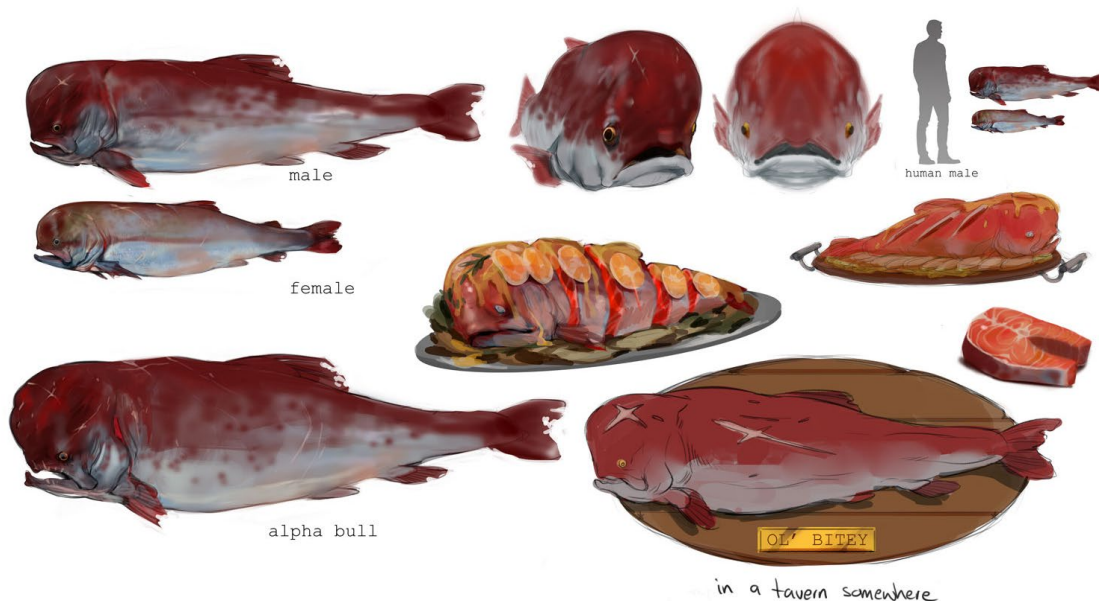
to be anthropocentric about it. Either way, it's spooky.”



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“As part of the expanded options April also gave us a more threatening version of the snowy owlbear. But I immediately said, ‘I want the one I fell in love with! I want the one that’s derp derp, sitting on his bum, looking like he doesn’t know what he’s going to do,’” Perkins says.

A snowy owlbear wasn’t the only creature to make it into *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* off the back of some innovative concept art. April’s second task was to draw the knucklehead trout, and alongside the traditional images of a very large fish, she drew the creature fixed to a plaque like a prize.



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“Knucklehead trout are huge and the **hucho taimen** I was basing them off is a monster fish that lives in Mongolia. I wasn’t simply drawing the fish but also thinking about how the people in Ten-Towns would use it. I created images of the fish sliced up to show how they would eat it and also realized that people display fish as trophies all the time,” she recalls.

“I jokingly doodled a version of this massive fish on a plaque and gave it the name ‘Ol’ Bitey’. I was imagining it mounted on the wall of a tavern belonging to a halfling who was missing an arm following the epic battle with this fish.”

“I decided that somebody caught this fish, mounted it, and put it over one of the tavern mantelpieces in Icewind Dale,” adds Perkins. “A wizard came along later and animated the fish so it would thrash and occasionally burst into song when anyone got close to it. Thus, Ol’ Bitey was born. I got to write a little song for the fish to sing, and we’ve put that song into the book.”



Did you always want to be an artist?

April Prime: Originally, I wanted to be an English professor. I decided I might want to consider art while on a trip to Melbourne. It’s pretty famous for its street art and a few artists showed us around their studio. It was a giant warehouse with a big roller door and when you went inside you were in this artistic wonderland.

Later I studied print media at Sydney College of the Arts, which

included screen printing, etching, lithography, and everything to do with print. It was a very hands-on experience. We'd make zines and T-shirts, and create giant screen prints. The Sydney College of the Arts is a gorgeous building that's heritage listed. It used to be an insane asylum. We would make paste-ups using these giant pieces of paper and the university would say, "It's fine to put them there, just don't touch the 200-year-old doorknobs."

Did that prepare you for the work you currently produce?

Towards the end of my second year at university I realized I wanted to be a tattoo artist instead. I ended up being offered an apprenticeship but I had to turn it down because I don't like hurting people. Even though I have tattoos myself, I'm too squeamish to do it to someone else!

When I was younger I had always thought I'd like to be a character artist, without knowing what that meant. I loved "Art of..." books so I started to get into that. After graduating university, I eventually enrolled in the online concept art diploma course at CG Spectrum. I fell into working on tabletop projects because I love D&D. I feel like we're living in the golden age of tabletop.

What's your creation process like?

I use a Cintiq and Photoshop to create pretty much everything I do. I love looking at traditional artwork, but I don't work that way myself because I hate getting stuff on my hands. I was never taught how to paint so I would love to pick up oil painting at some point in the future.

What's it been like to work with the D&D Team?

It's literally a dream come true. I've wanted to get art into a Dungeons & Dragons product since I was in high school. When I got a Twitter message from Shawn Wood asking if I wanted to work for Wizards of the Coast, I was so excited I was screaming. I played it cool and gave it 20 minutes before answering because I didn't want to seem too keen. I really love that there are so many women in art director positions at Wizards of the Coast. It's super inspiring to see women in a position that I hope to work in one day.

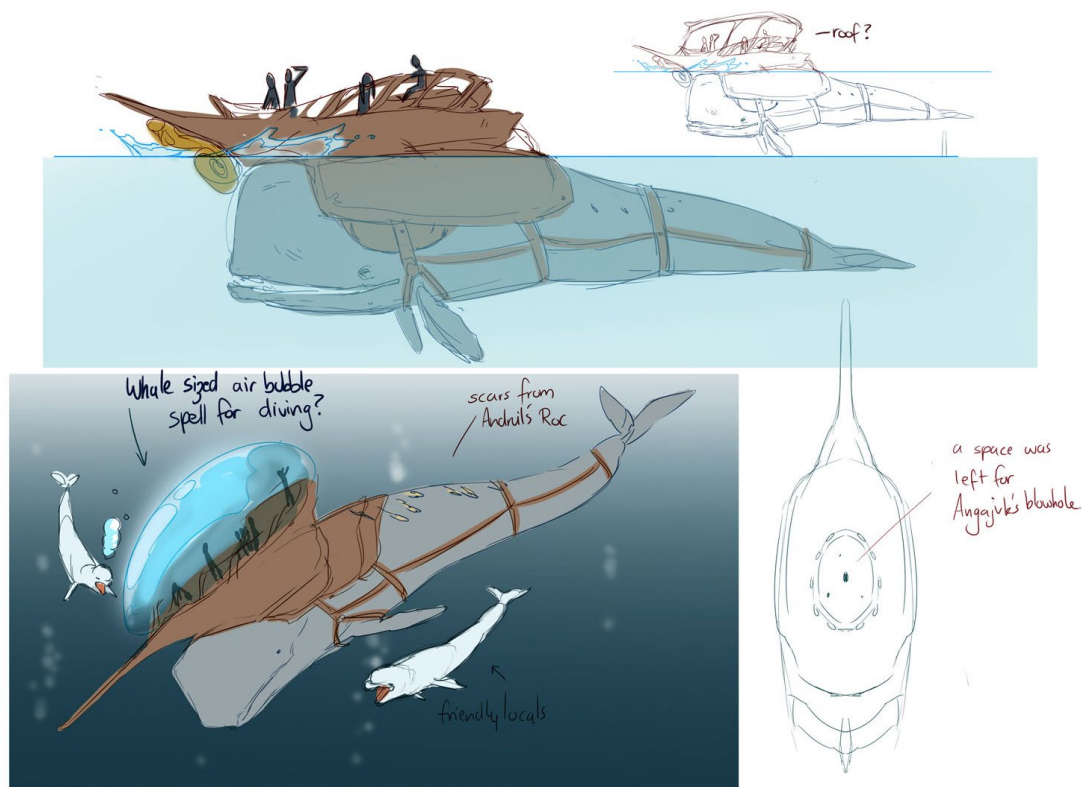
As the co-creator of *Dungeons & Doggies* are you steeped in animal art?

I'm predominantly a creature artist, although my day job mostly

consists of humanoid character art. But my strength is in animal anatomy and elements such as rendering feathers, so I was chuffed when the D&D Team came to me with a bunch of animals to work on.

Did you have a favorite out of everything you created for *Rime of the Frostmaiden*?

My favorite was Angajuk, a sperm whale that can talk. The brief was that Angajuk has a lodge strapped to his head that characters sit in as he ferries them across the sea. I thought it was a shame not to take the opportunity to create a fantasy submarine, so in my concept art I pitched the structure fitted to his head as being open-topped. Imagine a boat without sails that's strapped to his body using a big leather harness. I had the idea of him being able to blow a whale-sized air bubble over that boat. The doodle I did of him was probably the roughest drawing of all the ones I created but it clearly sold the idea because Chris Perkins really liked it.



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In the finished piece, Angajuk has created the air bubble and is diving underwater and there are two narwhals chatting to the people inside the boat. It's not super noticeable as you can't see its figurehead, but in the background is the wreck of the *Fallen Star*. That's not canon

but more of an Easter egg for anyone looking closely. That's also my D&D party on Angajuk's back, which is a little present for my players.



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What other characters should we watch out for?

I also created Oyaminartok the goliath werebear. She might look scary but she's quite nice and will help the players in the adventure. When it came to her clothing, I wanted it to be clear she's part of a culture. We ended up going with a fisherwoman look for her. She's wearing furs and has a fish strapped to her belt, as well as big metal beads decorating her beard.

I did the art for Tekeli-li as well. His name comes from the H.P. Lovecraft story *At the Mountains of Madness*. He's a gnoll vampire, and right away I pitched that he should be a striped hyena instead of the spotted hyena most gnolls are based on. A striped hyena is a lot thinner and they have these wicked mohawks going all the way down their backs. Being lanky and creepy works so much



better for his character because he's a vampire.



It's tricky to show Tekeli-li as a vampire because gnolls already have fangs. I borrowed an idea from *Magic the Gathering: Ixalan* where the vampire conquistadores have pointed helmets to represent their fangs. I gave Tekeli-li two whalebone earrings that look like tusks to suggest the same thing. I also found a really good reference picture of a hyena that had just shoved its face into a fresh kill, so the final art is Tekeli-li covered in blood. Fresh blood is so much redder than you think it is, especially in this

snow-covered landscape, which is white, blue and gray.



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When did you first get into Dungeons & Dragons?
Tabletop RPGs weren't that present in my life when I was a kid, but I loved video games such as *Neverwinter Nights* and *Dragon Age*. My brother had a copy of *Dragon Age: Origins* on his PC, and I used to sneak into his room and play it when he was away. I also loved fantasy such as the *Dragonlance* cartoon and the old D&D TV series. And I have two older cousins who got me into the original '80s *My Little Pony* cartoon, which is very fantasy-based. *Firefly's Adventure/Rescue from Midnight Castle* has dragons, monsters, night chariots, and magic.

When did you first play D&D?

The first time I ever played was way back in my first year of university. I'd lived in Palmerston and Humpty Doo in Australia where there weren't many opportunities to play D&D. When I got to university, we played a one-shot where we were all bards trying to prove that we weren't one-hit wonders. I played a Shetland pony centaur dwarf, back when centaurs were still homebrew. It was fun.

Do you have a favorite class?

I play wizards. I think I've played six wizards in a row at this point! My current character in our main campaign is a benevolent necromancer, so I'm slowly working my way through every single school of magic.

What's it been like to DM and how long have you been doing that? I've only done a few sessions and it was scary at first because two of my friends are learning how to play, while my other two friends are veterans. You don't realize how much a DM makes up on the fly! They managed to immediately derail the first session, bless their hearts, before one of them perma-deathed and had to be resurrected.

I'm running the *Lost Mine of Phandelver*, which is a good starter module for new players but also a great module for learning how to DM. And Icespire Peak is in the mountains nearby, so it's quite easy to lead them from *Lost Mine of Phandelver* to *Dragon of Icespire Peak*.

You can see more of April Prime's work on [Artstation](#) and connect with her on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* releases on September 15, 2020 with an MSRP of \$49.95 and is available to [preorder now](#).

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D&D LIVE 2020: ROLL W/ADVANTAGE

Dungeons & Dragons fans braved an icy virtual world to experience an adventure best served cold.

When our world spun in a new direction early in 2020, it sent out ripples that affected even the Forgotten Realms and the multiverse beyond. As with so many elements of our current lives, *D&D Live 2020: Roll w/Advantage* pivoted in response and shifted its exclusive reveals and A-list streams online.

Following a slight pause that saw the event move from May, the latest campaign storyline for Dungeons & Dragons has officially

been announced as *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*. While players had a slightly longer wait to get their first official peek at a snowy owlbear outside of a **must-have T-shirt**, that's nothing compared to the interval the creative team experienced.

“We began writing *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* back in late 2017 and we finished in the summer of 2018,” reveals D&D Principal Narrative Designer Chris Perkins. “It’s normal to work so far ahead on our projects because these things take time. There are so many little moving pieces that you have to get a good start. Still, I can’t believe it’s been two years since we put our metaphorical pens down.”



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Set in the frigid far north of the Forgotten Realms, but easily transportable to other settings, Perkins describes the adventure as a modern horror story rather than a gothic chiller. *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* is a tale of dark terror that revisits the forlorn, flickering candlelights of civilization known as Ten-Towns and the many bone-chilling locations that surround these frontier settlements.

“This storyline has got ice in its veins,” he continues. “Secrecy is one of its themes. The idea is that

everyone you meet in *Icwind Dale* came here for a reason, and a lot of those reasons are not necessarily good. Every character gets a secret and the only person who knows your character’s secret is you.

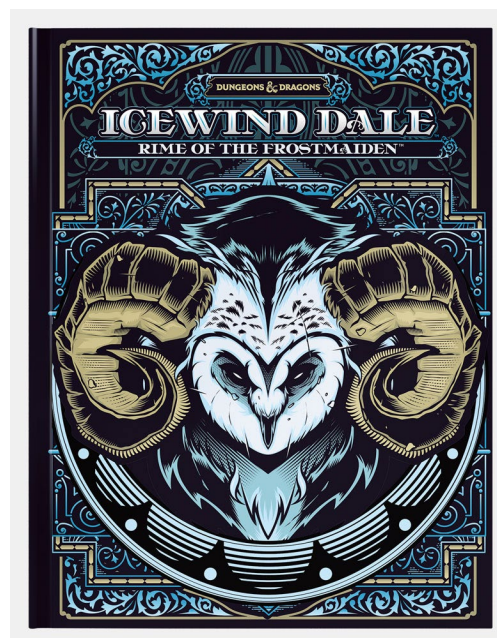


“Players can play that in one of two ways. They can keep the secret close to their chest and not reveal it to the other players, fostering party paranoia. Or they can divulge their secret anytime they want to, and then wrestle with its consequences. Some of the secrets are benign and don’t have any real consequence for the party. Others are terrifying.”

“I think it’s worth pointing out that one of the big inspirations for this adventure was John Carpenter’s *The Thing*,” adds Jeremy Crawford. “We can’t say much more than that because we don’t want to spoil the adventure but I think it would be good prep work for our DMs to go and watch that film to really get in the mood for the wintry horror of this story.”

Paranoia aside, the *Dragon+* Team was pining for the opportunity to step out of the sizzling Californian sun into a stage setting recreating Icewind Dale. Senior Communications Manager Greg Tito and his team did such a great job of bringing the Avernus hellscape to life in 2019 that we’re sure we’d have

been able to see our breaths amid the frozen tundra of this year's immersive entertainment experience. With a book "jam-packed with monsters", to quote Crawford, that's probably not all we'd have seen.



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"Chris Perkins and I were chatting and we think this adventure has more monsters in it than any adventure we've done thus far for fifth edition. Even if you may not run this wonderfully chilly, horror adventure, you can be sure you're going to get a truckload of frosty monsters. My favorite is the snow golem, which is terrifying," Crawford says.

"This book also has rules for things like blizzards and avalanches. And we introduce that goliaths have resistance to cold damage in this book. We realized that we've always said that the goliaths have adapted to living in higher elevations. If they grew up at the top of mountains, they'd need some way to not perish."

PRODUCT SHOWCASE

Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden wasn't the only new Dungeons & Dragons release having the sheets pulled off it. As in previous years at *D&D Live*, fans got to see a whole bunch of upcoming products for the first time.

For starters, those planning an expedition to Icewind Dale should arm themselves with dice that bring the heat. *Icewind Dale: Rime of the*

Frostmaiden—Dice and Miscellany includes eleven dice (two d20s for rolling with advantage and disadvantage, one d12, two d10s for percentile results, one d8, four d6s for rolling character stats, and one d4). Its box also functions as two felt-lined dice trays and includes a player-friendly foldout map of Icewind Dale and Ten-Towns, as well as twenty double-sided cards with descriptions and illustrations of characters and creatures the players might encounter in the region.



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The opening day showcase by hosts Anna Prosser and Mica Burton also featured WizKids' D&D Icons of the Realms: Sapphire Dragon, based on the art that was created for the **45th anniversary of Dungeons & Dragons**. A complement to WizKids' **Icewind Dale set of figures**, this premium figure, over 160mm tall, will be released in August with an MSRP of \$69.99. It perfectly captures the sapphire dragon's psionic nature, as its levitating horns and spines float in place, held aloft by its psychic force.



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Dungeons & Dragons is also no stranger to taking over kitchen tables but it’s usually more accustomed to doing that with maps, miniatures, and DM screens. Kyle Newman, Jon Peterson, and Michael Witwer’s cookbook, *Heroes’ Feast: The Official Dungeons & Dragons Cookbook*, collects eighty recipes inspired by the magical world of D&D that have been developed by a professional chef. How will you satisfy your craving for adventure: hogs in bedrolls, iron rations, Hommlet golden-roasted turkey, drow mushroom steaks, or Moonshae seafood risotto? The cookbook releases October 27, 2020 with an MSRP of \$35.

The stream of announcements also confirmed that we’re getting not one but two new D&D comics! Dark Horse comics’ *Stranger Things and Dungeons & Dragons* launches October 21, 2020, and tells the story of the first time the gang meets Dustin, before Eleven and Max play D&D with them later in the series.

Meanwhile, IDW’s *At the Spine of the World* introduces colorful new characters when it launches November 4, 2020 and drops them



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into a realm blighted by feral beasts, continual blizzards, and... a strange madness? As comic writer Aimee Garcia revealed, one of those characters was plucked

directly from history.

“A.J. [Mendez] found this really cool article about a Viking woman who was a warrior and didn’t die even though she received a blunt axe wound to the face! Everyone thought only Viking males battled but she was given a hero’s burial. Once we found that out we created Runa, who we’re really excited to introduce to the world!” she says.



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The marketplace is also a key part of any real-world D&D Live event, showing off items for the first time once they have been announced. Premium boxset creators Beadle & Grimm’s wanted to maintain that tradition of convention storefronts (and scoop an incredible amount of pre-orders for the *Platinum Edition of Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* at the same time) by setting up a virtual booth on Twitch.com.

“We wanted people to be able to stop by and ask some questions,” says co-founder Paul Shapiro. “They could go into the chat and have us show them what’s in the *Eberron* box or ask questions about what’s going to be in *Rime of the Frostmaiden*.”

WATCH BEADLE & GRIMM’S VIRTUAL BOOTH

With the big announcements out of the way there was the chance to watch live gaming sessions featuring D&D luminaries and special guests—including the *Red Nose Day* and *Cast of Thrones* games (for more on those, swipe right to our *Streaming Highlights*). But with social distancing still impacting people’s ability to get together in

person, the D&D Team also offered opportunities for remote participation via its Live Event Portal.



As part of that, fans were given the chance to shape the event itself by participating in an expansive online puzzle. Running across [Instagram](#) and the main D&D channels, this mashup of fantasy storytelling, community engagement, and reality television saw ten well-known members of the D&D community playing characters in a series of challenges, to find which of them was best equipped to be the champion of Faerûn.

“There was an overarching storyline as to why these characters were pitted against each other in these reality TV-style challenges and fans voted on who should be kept at the end of each session. That continued until one character reigned supreme,” Tito tells *Dragon+*.

“It was a popularity contest, but viewers were also trying to work out who was the true champion. The whole event was about deductive reasoning as players discovered and solved this puzzle. It was a wonderful way for fans to interact with this story in an active way.”

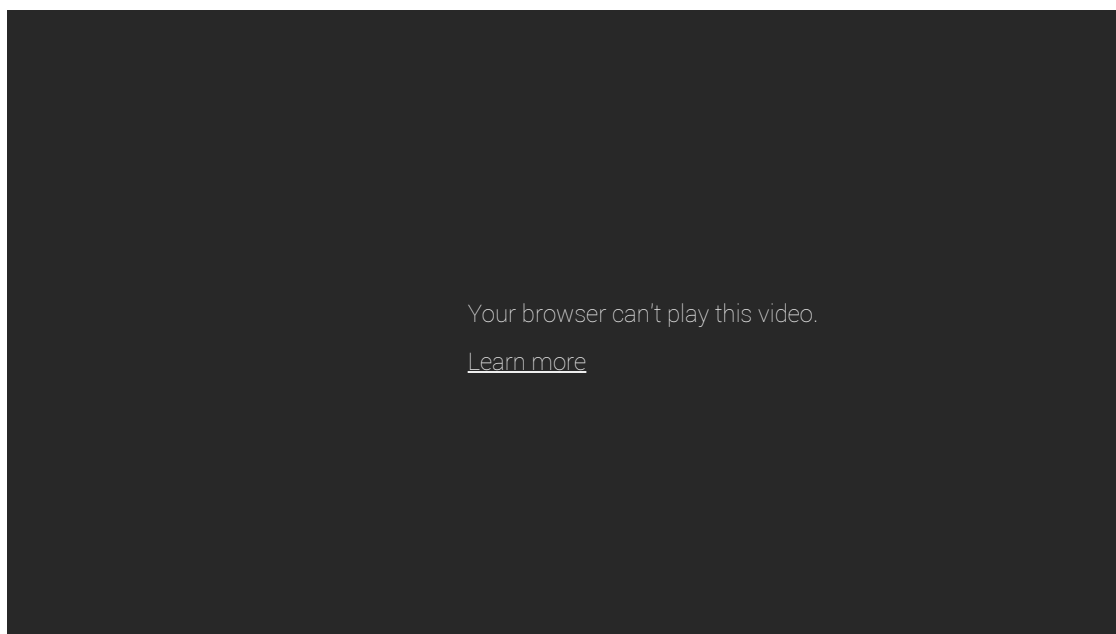
Congrats to Imdra Arlaggath (Satine Phoenix), the new Champion of Ten Towns, and well done to the D&D community for rooting out the doppelganger cultist, Olivessa Untapoor (Krystina Arielle).

RED NOSE DAY



A small donation to Red Nose Day allowed players to take part in the Reality RP event, as well as opening up online gaming sessions. *D&D Live 2020: Roll w/ Advantage* not only helped raise money for Red Nose Day Fund/Comic Relief US with donations from players (with four Adventurers League gameplay options available), it also sold event apparel and created a special adventure (both still available!) to boost that charity haul. Apparel commemorating the partnership with a snowy owlbear so cute it'd

break a cute-o-meter can still be [purchased here](#) for a limited time, while the adventure *Return to the Glory* (which sees a group of orc characters try to reclaim the most advanced underground stronghold ever known to orc-kind) is also available to buy.



D&D Vice President Nathan Stewart also joined event hosts Prosser and Burton to announce that the amount of Red Nose Day donations that would be matched by D&D was being increased to \$250,000. You can still make your donation [here](#).

Until next year, when we hope to board the bus to D&D Summer Camp and meet you all in person once more, stay safe.

Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden is a 320-page hardcover adventure with a double-sided poster map of Icewind Dale and Ten-Towns. It releases on September 15, 2020 with an MSRP of \$49.95 and is available to [preorder now](#).



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Streaming Highlights

D&D Live 2020: Roll w/Advantage casts its icy spell over this month's livestreams.



The D&D Team packed its tables with personality at *D&D Live 2020: Roll w/Advantage* to raise money for **Red Nose Day**. Actors such as David Harbour (*Hellboy*, *Stranger Things*) and Karen Gillan (*Avengers: Endgame*, *Superman Returns*) were joined by funny people such as Sue Perkins, Brian Posehn, and Thomas Middleditch, as well as *WWE* Superstars Xavier Woods, Tyler Breeze, Ember Moon, Alexa Bliss, and Dio Maddin. To borrow a line from Beadle & Grimm's, it's like goblin Christmas but with less stabbing.

BALDUR'S GATE III GAMEPLAY

Larian Studios' Swen Vincke kicks off *D&D Live 2020* by gathering his party and venturing forth with exclusive gameplay from the upcoming *Baldur's Gate III* video game. Watch as his digital d20

rolls two when he only needs four on a saving throw (doh!), encounters legendary explorer Volo, and desperately races against time to get all the way down to the Underdark before the streaming clock runs out.

Shortly before *D&D Live 2020: Roll w/Advantage* Larian announced that—current situation allowing—*Baldur's Gate III* will go into Early Access on Steam and Stadia in August. You can find that announcement [here](#) and subscribe for *Baldur's Gate III* updates at the [official website](#).

D&D LIVE

The opening D&D live-play game of the show saw Dungeon Master Deborah Ann Woll and players Amy Acker, Jay Ellis, Janina Gavankar, Matthew Lillard, and Sam Richardson don snowshoes to seek trinkets within frozen ancient ruins. Will rogue Faline's unmarked potions be a help or a hindrance?

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[Learn more](#)



D&D RED NOSE DAY

Exploding turkey legs are the munitions of choice as Geek & Sundry's Felicia Day, *Stranger Things*' Brett Gelman, *Never Have I Ever*'s Maitreyi Ramakrishnan, and *Silicon Valley*'s Martin Starr enter Chris Perkins' tower of doom.

#BLACKAF SIDETABLE

D&D welcomes a group of POC D&D creators, DMs and players to share their voices and talk about the current events in the world and the reality of their time playing and being part of the tabletop RPG community. Host **Omega Jones** leads the discussion, with **Tanya DePass**, **Aabria Iyengar**, **T.K. Johnson**, **Ember Moon**, and **B. Dave Walters** sharing their voices.

COMEDIANS PLAY D&D

Try not to laugh as much as DM Kate Welch (you'll fail, trust us), as comedians Thomas Middleditch (*Silicon Valley*), Sue Perkins (*The Great British Bakeoff*), Brian Posehn (*Nerd Poker*), and Kevin Sussman (*Ugly Betty*) put the laughter into slaughter. We're sorry, what kind of damage did you say the verbeeg takes? Oh...



LOST ODYSSEY HEROES

“DM to the Stars” Chris Perkins lives up to that billing, as *Avengers: Endgame*’s Karen Gillan, *Stranger Things*’ David Harbour, *Guardians of the Galaxy*’s Pom Klementieff, and *Legends of Tomorrow*’s Brandon Routh gather to search for a dragon to put in a dungeon. Will this wonderful silly cast be upstaged by an avocado-

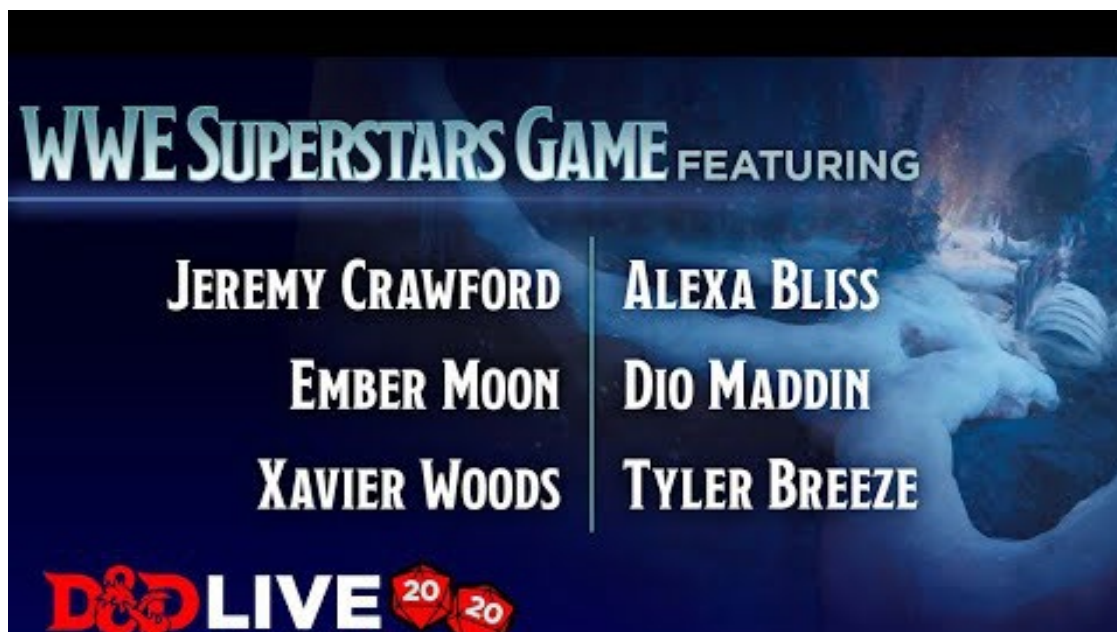
eating mammoth? You better believe it.

CAST OF THRONES

It's a voice-off as Kate Welch brings her range of British (and Kiwi, "That's nice") accents to bear in a hilarious adventure that includes *Game of Thrones* actors Kristian Nairn, Daniel Portman, Iwan Rheon, Natalia Tena, and Gemma Whelan. Will they find Barbara Bladeboys' missing left shoe?

D&D WWE

Avalanche! Beefcake destroyer Jeremy Crawford wastes no time putting WWE superstars Alexa Bliss, Tyler Breeze, Dio Maddin, Ember Moon, and Xavier Woods through the ringer as a wall of snow plummets down the mountain towards them. From autotuned baby vomit to Miley Cyrus' *Wrecking Ball*, it's an aural joy in Auril's kingdom.



COMIC RELIEF PLAYS DUNGEONS & DRAGONS

You can still watch the hilarious D&D one-shot featuring Dungeon Master Paul Foxcroft and British comedians Ed Gamble, Nish Kumar, Sara Pascoe, and Sue Perkins, playing in aid of Covid-19 relief funds around the world... raising £25,100 (\$31,000)!



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PREVIEWS

IN THE WORKS



Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden

by Matt Chapman

The internal codename for the upcoming Dungeons & Dragons adventure is *Avalanche*, and it's the perfect description for the peril that has descended upon Icewind Dale. Auril, the merciless god of cold and winter (also known as the Frostmaiden, Lady Frostkiss, and Icedawn), has plunged the already inhospitable region into everlasting winter. Yet it turns out she was a late addition to these icy escapades.

“The adventure did not cycle around Auril at first,” says D&D Principal Narrative Designer Chris Perkins. “But in much the same way that Strahd is a reflection of his domain, Auril is a reflection of hers, and Icewind Dale is as cruel and unforgiving as she is. It seemed strange to tell a story in that setting and not really touch upon the Frostmaiden at all. Once we realized her absence was noticeable, we made her a more central part of the adventure.”



(Select to view)

Auril will feature on Tyler Jacobson's cover for the new D&D storyline, as well as Hydro74's alt-cover for copies of the book sold in **friendly local gaming stores**. The Frostmaiden uses a new fifth-edition mechanism where a creature can be destroyed but instantly takes on a new form. Auril is a tough cookie for any party that chooses to engage her, as she has three distinct forms, each with their own stat block.

"This is an approach we haven't used before where a single creature can have multiple stat blocks. Because each form is slightly tougher than the one before it, the fight becomes increasingly intense. Your party's resources are being used up during the combat, but Auril's are not. It's really scary," Perkins reveals.

"We wanted to have the sense that you're fighting Auril backwards in time. Her first form is called the cold crone. It's this old, hunched, **tripartite** creature that combines the features of a goat, a wolf, and an owl. Her middle form is called the brittle maiden—a svelte, angular, feminine creature made of jagged ice. Her third form is called winter's womb, resembling a radiant diamond that contains her divine spark. It represents Auril in her most primal form."

COLD BLOODED

Auril has cast a spell so powerful it essentially prevents the sun from rising in the region, naturally freezing everything. Showcased through art, that theme of isolation and exposure permeates the book.

“One of the greatest things about the art is that the mood of the story is conveyed through it. When you see all the pieces together, they tell our story. Often when we were reviewing final art, the kinds of comments we had were, ‘The buildings need more icicles,’” Perkins remembers.

“When you’re an artist, there are things you can use to fill spaces and make your composition more interesting to help tell the story. Plants are one way to focus things, and we took that tool away from the artists. We were constantly saying, ‘Pile more snow along the edges. And no plants! Everything’s dead, buried under snow,’” adds Senior Art Director Kate Irwin.

“It’s hard to totally take that out of your toolbox as an artist. And it wasn’t just plants but also other elements such as lighting. We tried to be consistent with the details of the world, which meant being diligent about having Icewind Dale look like it never gets lighter than evening time. The way you usually make something stand out in an image is to shine light on it. But if it’s always dusk or night, you don’t have that trick to fall back on.”

The question the team found themselves consistently asking was, where is that light coming from? In some cases, it required creativity at the commissioning stage to make sure artists weren’t being painted



(Select to view)

into a corner, no pun intended. Perkins recalls one case where it even affected the encounter itself.

“We were going to include an illustration of a hag in a frozen cave, but as I was writing the description for that encounter, I realized there was no light source and we wouldn’t be able to see anything,” he says. “I ended up giving the hag a will-o’-wisp companion just so the artist had a light source they could include in the scene.”

FUTURE’S SO BRIGHT

The weather report may be bleak for the inhabitants of Ten-Towns, but, contrary to popular belief, an ill wind can blow someone some good. The cold darkness enveloping Icewind Dale creates the perfect environment for sunlight-sensitive creatures such as the duergar.



(Select to view)

Xardorok Sunblight is an ambitious duergar who has plans to become the first of his kind to establish a kingdom on the surface. “These evil, subterranean dwarves are tempted to the surface when they realize the land is perpetually dark. It’s too good an opportunity for Xardorok to pass up,” Perkins explains.

Perkins knew he wanted his dwarven antagonist to be captivated by a particular substance, and he turned to the film *Goldfinger* for inspiration. In that movie, Bond villain Auric Goldfinger is singularly

obsessed with gold. In Xardorok's case, it's a crystalline substance known as chardalyn.

Perkins says there are many interesting properties to this material. "Chardalyn is a malleable crystalline substance. Like metal, it can be sculpted and shaped, which is useful. It also has the durability of steel so it can be used to make weapons and such," he reveals. "The material also takes magic extremely well and can be used to make wands, staffs, and other magic items."

Part of the danger of chardalyn is that it can also become suffused with evil forms of magical energy, such as demonic magic. Those who come into contact with chardalyn that has been tainted by demonic magic can then become infected and corrupted by it.

"When we have seen chardalyn in the past, it's usually been a fragment of *Crenshinibon*—better known as the *Crystal Shard*, an evil artifact from the Drizzt novels. There, it was used to raise a crystal tower. When this tower was destroyed, its fragments were scattered across Icewind Dale. Those who claim these fragments become corrupted by the demonic magic and start to behave very badly," Perkins says, noting that R.A. Salvatore's *The Crystal Shard* is such a key piece of Icewind Dale's history and identity, it would have been weird to tell a story in that setting and not reference it. "What Xardorok does with his vast supply of chardalyn is utterly terrifying," Perkins adds with a smile.

LOST CITY

One key aspect of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* involves the discovery and exploration of an ancient Netherese city buried under the ice. Netheril is one of the Forgotten Realms' lost empires. Its wizards were unsurpassed in their expertise, and their magic rivalled the gods, which is ultimately what led to their hubris and their demise. "A necropolis buried under the ice is a type of location we've never visited before," Perkins says, describing the city as Atlantean in its feel.



(Select to view)

“It’s hard to capture the entire breadth and scope of the city in one shot,” Irwin adds, “but we have a sprawling, two-page map that gives the DM an overview of the city to carry some of that weight, as well as some illustrations that show parts of it. Each illustration has a haunting quality to it.”

Of course, no Netherese ruin is complete without amazing treasure for adventurers to find. Is Perkins able to shine a light into this perma-dusk world and reveal some of its potential treasure?

“You can’t really detail a lost Netherese city and not delve into some of that ancient magic,” he confesses. “I don’t want to spoil too much, but there are definitely some fun magic toys down there that surpass anything we’ve seen in our other adventures of late.”

This is also the adventure in which the D&D team finally answers a question that has haunted fans for several years: what’s up with those mysterious obelisks that keep showing up in every adventure? “It’s about time,” says Perkins, “but you’ll have to read the adventure to find out.”

***Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* is a 320-page hardcover adventure with a double-sided poster map of Icwind Dale and Ten-Towns. It releases on September 15, 2020 with an MSRP of \$49.95 and is available to preorder now.**

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IN THE WORKS



Wizkids D&D Icons of the Realms

by Matt Chapman

Who would have thought that figure sculptors would need to check the weather before they start work? A little meteorological knowledge turned out to be a handy addition to the skillsets of figure makers at WizKids as they worked on the inhabitants of the arctic tundra of Icewind Dale. As we learned on the previous page, this region has been made even more inhospitable by the everlasting winter imposed by the god Auril in the *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* storyline.

“When we build the figure setlist for a D&D fall campaign, the first thing we do is make sure we understand the tone, the mood, and the goal of the storyline. They are quite varied! For **Icewind Dale**, it was about the cold and harsh environment of the savage north, the bleak nature of travel under a sunless sky, and the hopeless feeling of the townsfolk who have had to endure Auril’s wrath for far too long,” says Patrick O’Hagan, Executive Producer for RPGs at WizKids.

“After that, we check for climate, note past figures we have created, and look in the *Monster Manual* for gaps which match the environment and/or the creature type. We go through multiple different iterations to make sure we have a compelling group of figures that helps support the overall storyline.”



(Select to view)

The first creatures to pique the interest of WizKids' team were specific to that wintry environment. The earliest information circulated about *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* included April Prime's standout piece of art imagining a snowy owl version of an owlbear, and also confirmed that fierce tundra yetis lived in this icy setting. Both were instant additions to the D&D Icons of the Realms roster.



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“How could we not include the snowy owlbear? And as soon as we learned the abominable yeti would be included we moved very fast to create one for the set, as well as three additional yeti types that will be released as a promotional box when the storyline is released in the fall,” says O’Hagan, revealing that they’re not the only figures directly influenced by the windswept location.

“A lot of the figures had to be adjusted during the design process to reflect the harsh climate, including the addition of face masks, furs, and other coverings.”

O’Hagan says his personal favorites from the set are gnoll vampire Tekeli-li and goliath werebear Oyaminartok. The god Auril also has multiple forms and all of her different aspects are captured in the set (“One is definitely creepy!” he tells *Dragon+*). Yet the fan favorite is likely to be on a par with the **large**



sailing ship and monstrous
Infernal War Machine

(Select to view)

WizKids
has previously released, as the
company has created a huge version of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*’s dragon construct.

“The D&D Team let us know the overall importance to the storyline of the gargantuan dragon construct made of chardalyn. I want to call out that our premium figure of it weighs 3lbs! We’ll add a second premium figure when the gargantuan white dragon Arveiatorace is released in January.”

Blind booster boxes of the D&D Icons of the Realms range (containing four random miniatures; one rare and three common or uncommon figures) are released in fall 2020 with an MSRP of \$16.99. The Premium Chardalyn Dragon is also released in fall 2020 with an MSRP of \$79.99.



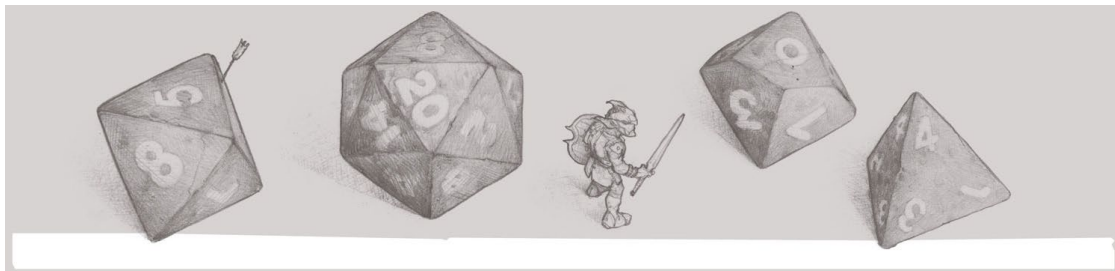
ARKHAN THE CRUEL AND THE DARK ORDER

Designed by Joe Manganiello, WizKids' Arkhan the Cruel and the Dark Order miniature collection includes all of the characters created for the *Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus* storyline. "I had the distinct pleasure of working with famed comic-book artist Max Dunbar to bring Arkhan and his crew to life. Max's artwork became the basis for this new set of playable miniatures," Manganiello says. Tiamat's general Arkhan comes with his minotaur bodyguard Torogar Steelfist, the turtle death cleric Krull, a berserker, a summoned white abishai, and Arkhan's manticore pet Chango.

MSRP: \$39.99 ON AMAZON

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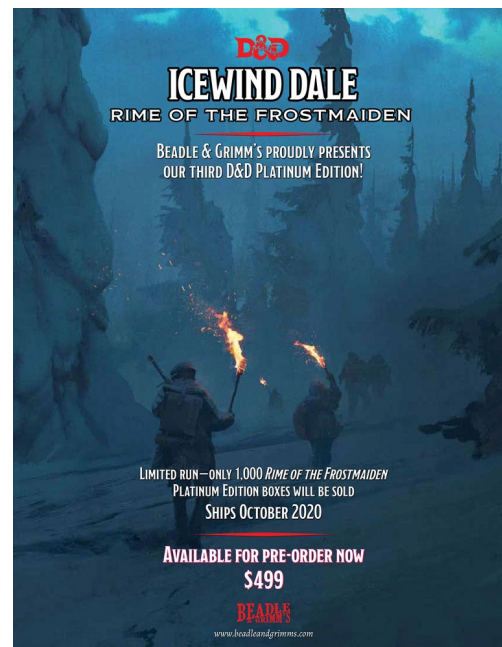
IN THE WORKS



Beadle and Grimm's Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden Platinum Edition

by Matt Chapman

A new Dungeons & Dragons storyline can mean only one thing: it's time to wake up the goblins at Beadle & Grimm's Pandemonium Warehouse. With Icewind Dale as its poster-map setting, Ten-Towns as a major city for adventuring, and some dubious magical material straight out of a Drizzt novel that would make a fetching piece of jewelry, this is what they live for. Or as their goblin handler would put it, this is the only reason they're still alive.



(Select to view)

“We’re always trying to find the coolest elements for our *Platinum Edition* boxes that also drive the storyline forward,” says Paul Shapiro, co-founder of Beadle & Grimm’s. We witnessed some of that “cool” kit—pun very much intended—on the previous page, and Shapiro confirms that WizKids is dropping a curated set of pre-painted minis from its *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* range into the next box.

“The twenty minis in our set include some of the rarest minis from the adventure that usually appear in WizKids’ blind booster boxes. These will include large rare figures such as the frost giant skeleton, creatures suited to these icy conditions such as the yeti and the **crag cat**, as well as major NPCs such as Xardorok. The god Auril will also be included in her three distinct forms, with a different mini for each form,” he reveals.

A HAND UP WITH A HANDOUT

A major selling point of Beadle & Grimm’s premium boxes are the high-quality items that help make the lives of Dungeon Masters that little bit easier. DMs consistently praise the handouts that can be shared with their players, and *Rime of the Frostmaiden* has a couple of standout examples.

“The storyline contains a puzzle that the players will have to solve or decode. In the book, this appears as a page of notes that the DM can use to explain what the characters have discovered. We’re actually creating the puzzle as a piece of art so the players can solve it by engaging with it,” Shapiro says, adding that the rules to goat-ball—a popular game among goliaths that is played with a ball made from goat skin—will also be included.

“The ‘Rime’ of the Frostmaiden that’s referred to in the story title is also an actual document that can be discovered in-game. We’re creating that physical document so the players can read it, hand it around the table, and refer back to it again later.”

Beadle & Grimm’s has also carved out a reputation with its cartography skills. Icewind Dale is next up to get the poster treatment, with locations such as a mountain fortress and a very special necropolis also in line for a gorgeous reproduction. Yet it’s the extra work put into the Ten-Towns setting that may have DMs luring players back there time and time again.

“One of the most popular features in our *Waterdeep: Dragon Heist* **box** were the reusable tiles that could be placed together in any combination to create a cityscape map,” Shapiro says. “DMs really liked those as they could be used in later adventures any time the party returned to Waterdeep. The variation we’re designing for Ten-Towns will allow the DM to create any street scene in the region and then reuse them on an ongoing basis.”

JEWEL IN THE BOX

It wouldn't be a Beadle & Grimm's collection without something a little bit special for the players to flaunt at the table. The *Eberron Gold Edition* set the trend with its bling based on that region's *dragonshards*, creating wearable versions with its vibrant, polyurethane-sculpted gems. Icewind Dale may not have *dragonshards* to boast of, but fans of *R.A Salvatore's Drizzt novels* will know that the region is littered with other crystal shards.

"There's a particular amulet that plays a big part in one of the plotlines of this adventure and we're making a wearable version of that. We're also in the process of finalizing a few other pieces of jewelry, which will be similar in construction to the faction tokens we've included in previous premium boxes," Shapiro teases.

Beadle & Grimm's Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden Platinum Edition releases in **October 2020** with an MSRP of **\$499.99** and is available to **preorder now**.

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80s Tees X Dungeons & Dragons Collection

In 1983 six youngsters boarded an amusement park ride and got a lot more thrills than they bargained for. Transported to a fantastical realm where a powerful, mono-horned wizard battles a multi-headed dragon god, they were guided by the calm figure of the Dungeon Master as they searched for a way home. Ranger Hank, acrobat Diana, cavalier Eric, thief Sheila, magician Presto, and barbarian Bobby (with unicorn sidekick Uni) left their indelible mark upon the generation of kids who tuned in for three seasons of magical adventures.

“Saturday morning cartoons were a staple in most households in the ’80s. They inspired imaginations and creativity, which is so important, says **Gary G**, Creative Director at 80sTees.com, who designed the T-shirts. “We went heavy on the cartoon tees for the initial launch of our Dungeons & Dragons range as it was one of both mine and our owner Kevin’s favorite shows as a kid.”



Gary wanted to ensure that the 80s Tees x Dungeons & Dragons collection included at least one tee featuring each of the main cast, while also highlighting a few of the show's villains. He created flattering poses for every character, even those who often served as comic relief in the TV series.

"A few of the tees were derived from the classic character model sheets drawn in 1983. They provided a great reference, allowing me to keep the characters 'on model' while creating new poses," he tells *Dragon+*, explaining his heroic designs for the occasionally bumbling wizard Presto and sometimes cowardly cavalier Eric.

"Presto is learning these new powers and wants to be a great magician but is always unsure of himself. He's often surprised by the outcome of his actions and I think **our Presto tee** shows that. Eric may not have been born a hero and tries to avoid danger at every turn, but

in the end he winds up doing heroic things without knowing it. If you look closely at the **shadow on the ground**, I actually drew Eric with a warrior's helmet and drawn sword to symbolize the hero he could be. It's subtle and many may not notice it but it's there!"



Even when previous character art did exist in one form or another, Gary was called into action to create his own version of it. Along the way he soaked up references from the TV series itself and got to include some of them in his work.

"I had the cartoon show on in the background for inspiration while I was drawing, and **this short phrase** is said by Dungeon Master in the first episode of the cartoon. It's such a fun phrase I had to use it. And

that **group shot with Tiamat** was actually on the cover of the DVD release of the TV series. It's such a good representation of the cartoon but we didn't actually have that image so I had to redraw it."

As excited as Gary is to have launched the range, he says he can't wait to keep developing new concepts for it. As well as working on more tees from the Dungeons & Dragons cartoon, he'll be looking at other aspects of the world's greatest roleplaying game.

"We are just starting out with Dungeons & Dragons. We will most definitely expand the cartoon line of tees and we've already had a lot of requests for specific character designs we didn't go heavy on," he says.

"We have also created some 'new' classic D&D designs. We always try to give our products more of a vintage look and there are so many classic images that translate to cool vintage tees—from book covers and internal pages to action-figure packaging from products that were released back in the '80s. And **Warduke** was always a favorite of mine as I had the action figure and created my own adventures with him. The amount of D&D art is endless."



The **80s Tees x Dungeons & Dragons collection** and the **Dungeons & Dragons Classic Game Shirts** are available now with prices starting from \$38.22. Follow the official 80s Tees' **Facebook**, **Instagram**, and **Twitter** accounts for previews of upcoming products.



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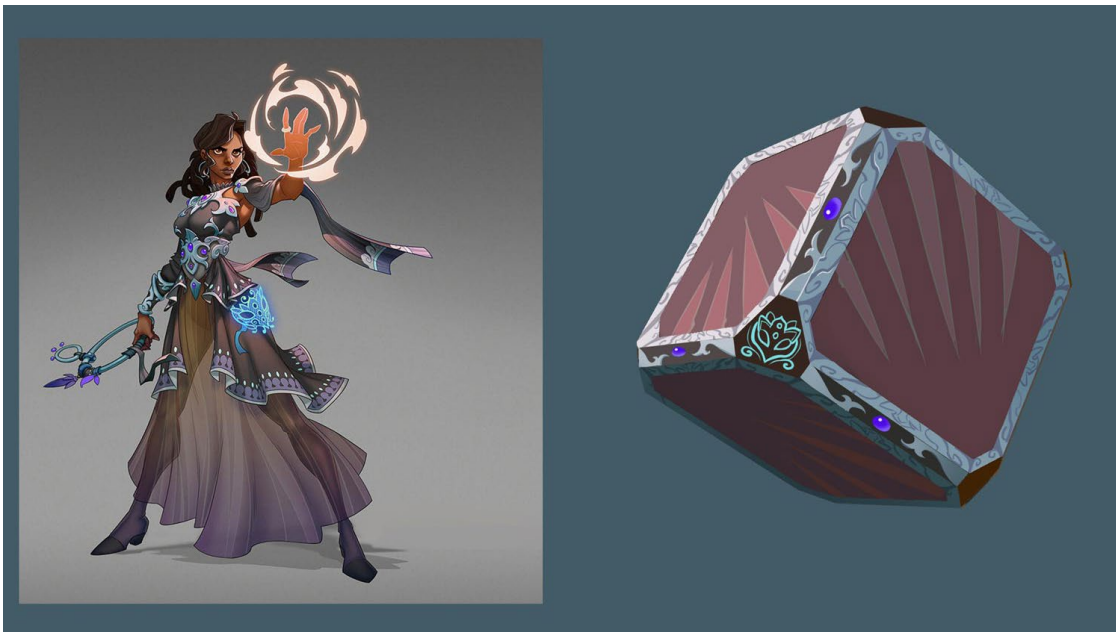
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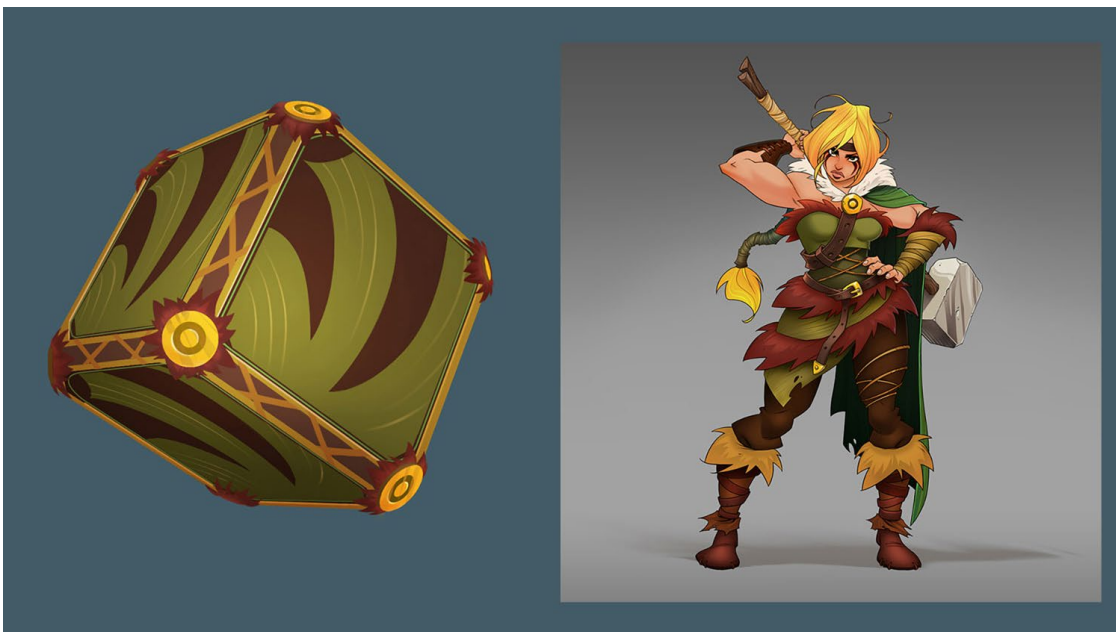
D&D Dice Adventures

If you believe human bard Alexander Pope, “**A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.**” Turns out a lot of knowledge can also be quite bad for your health, as gamers soon discover in *D&D Dice Adventures*. This casual mobile game sees players collecting dice that represent Dungeons & Dragons characters, as they battle a powerful, hidden foe bent on controlling Faerûn.

“An evil figure is trying to sap all knowledge out of the world by sucking up the essence of living heroes or heroes that have passed. This shadowy figure has created a bunch of shapeshifters to steal all of this knowledge,” says Senior Product Marketing Manager Bradley Cummings. “They’re stabbing heroes with a soul knife and pulling out all of their knowledge and abilities,” adds Creative Lead Terry Redfield. “The shapeshifters then become receptacles for those abilities and are able to impersonate those creatures. When Ioun finds out about this, she deploys her priestesses to knock the evil out of them. The character you play in the game is a shapeshifter who has been turned by one of Ioun’s priestesses.”

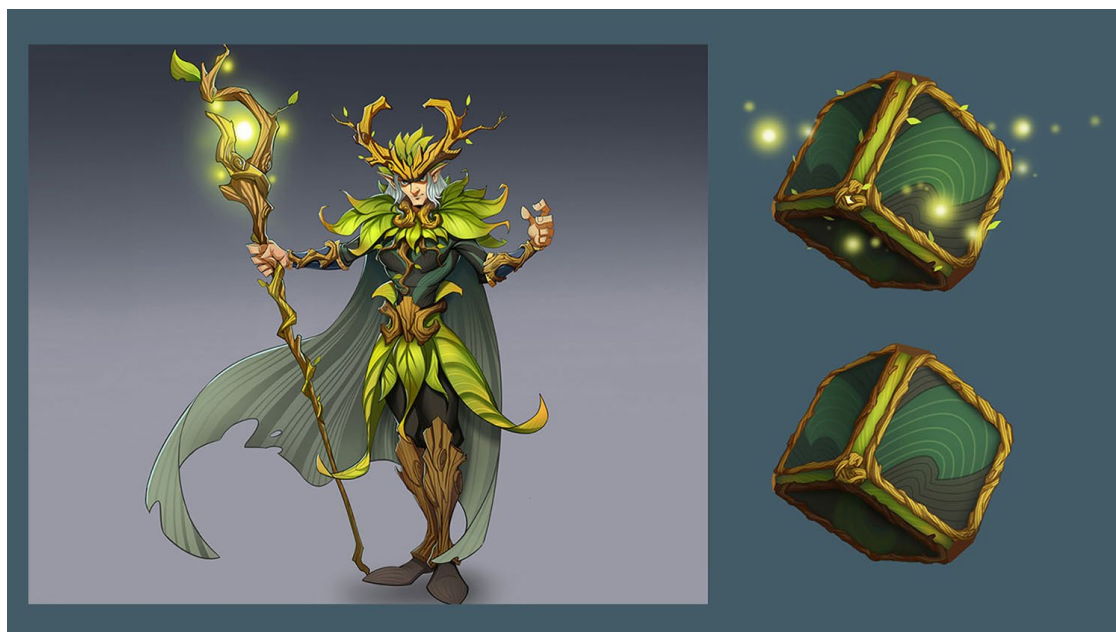


Eager to help you foil these evil plans to eliminate powerful and famous people and replace them, Ioun traps the essences of former heroes within stones (which appear in the game as dice). The game allows the player to collect various characters they meet during their adventure to form a party of five. While a player can shift characters in and out of their party, one spot will always be occupied by the shapeshifter who can use the trapped essences inside the Ioun Stones and transform into deceased heroes to tap into their memories and skills.



“Some of the heroes we’ve created for the game and some of them you’ll already know—for example, early in the story you’ll come into

contact with the Companions of the Hall. But this is also a story about finding your identity. Who did this to me? Why can I change into all these people? Along the way players will explore the Forgotten Realms, as they try to find out who's behind these terrible events and hopefully save the world,” she tells *Dragon+*.



“*D&D Dice Adventures* also has connective tissue to our other Dungeons & Dragons games. You’ll see characters such as Minsc and Boo, Khalid, and Dynaheir from the *Baldur’s Gate* series of video games. The upcoming *Baldur’s Gate III* video game features a storyline about mind flayers using illithid tadpoles to create advanced soldiers and our use of *Ioun stones* shows where that tech came from.”



Drizzt

ROLL PLAY

The casual gameplay of *D&D Dice Adventures* involves fighting or outsmarting waves of monsters as the party completes missions to further the ongoing storyline. Players roll dice to see how well their characters succeed and the gameplay uses dice with symbols rather than numbers. The more symbols a player matches when they roll, the more powerful the action from a character with an ability matching that symbol.

“Players can lock dice that have landed on the same side and reroll the rest. Every character who has that particular kind of attack carries it out at a higher level or with a higher combo for each extra dice showing the symbol,” says Redfield.

“Each die that represents a party member also has a unique design. These dice level up as you collect the specific shards that match them. For example, if you have a Dynaheir die you can go into particular nodes in certain adventures and collect shards to make her die even better. As she levels up, her die begins to look visibly nicer and when she reaches the top tier she gets cool effects every time her die is rolled.”

D&D Dice Adventures uses d6 dice for the majority of its gameplay but also features narrative events that can only be determined by the roll of a d20. The result can depend on which types of character you have in your party to influence the roll. For example, in a situation where you’re trying to charm your way through, maybe to get past some guards, if you have two charming characters in your party you get a +2 bonus to the roll.

“We wanted to throw a little bit of polyhedral activity in there to enhance the narrative and break up the combat. You might hear a screech up ahead and it’s a banshee. Do you cover your ears or hide your face? One of those options is going to be better than the other, and you roll a d20 for whichever action you choose,” says Redfield.

“We also added a Dungeon Master talking over the top of cinematic scenes. This minimizes the amount of talking-head dialogue in the game and stops players getting fatigued. Boiling all of that information down into a single cool piece of narrative helps engage players who would otherwise skip those scenes.”



INTRODUCTORY EXPERIENCE

The result is a mobile game that is easily recognizable to existing D&D players, taking them on an all-new adventure in a world they love. Featuring iconic monsters and characters, it will also reference major D&D adventures such as *Baldur's Gate: Descent Into Avernus*, as well as future adventures down the road. Yet Cummings says the main aim was to introduce the world of Dungeons & Dragons to a casual gaming audience.

“We wanted *D&D Dice Adventures* to be an entry point to the concept of D&D itself rather than being a lite version of the tabletop game. D&D is now an established part of popular culture and people understand certain recognizable touchpoints, such as a beholder. Our aim was to create a mobile game which furthers that experience,” he says.

D&D Dice Adventures is released in Autumn 2020 for iOS and

Android.



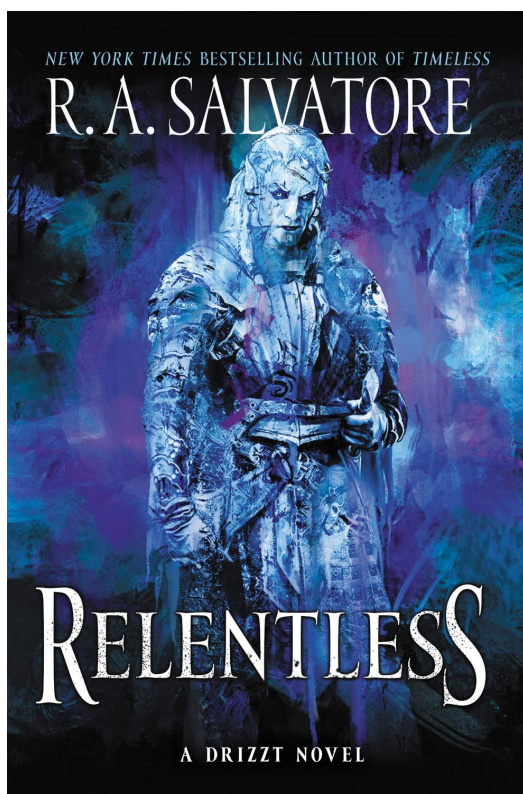
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IN THE WORKS



R.A. Salvatore's Relentless

by Matt Chapman



(Select to view)

immortalisation as a Funko Pop figure (alongside faithful cat companion Guenhwyvar), he's officially an icon.

“My heart is always warmed by the idea that people have come to care about this character so deeply,” author R.A. Salvatore tells *Dragon+*, as his latest trilogy featuring drow warrior Drizzt Do'Urden moves towards its thrilling finale. “There are people still reading these books who started reading them in 1988. That thought is overwhelming.”

In the 32 years since he first appeared in *The Crystal Shard*, Drizzt has become one of the most beloved characters in all of fantasy. From his appearance in the classic *Baldur's Gate* series of video games to his recent



“The character of Drizzt is bigger than my work and has been for a while. My son showed me a Ta-Nehisi Coates article where he references Drizzt and I nearly passed out. How cool is that? When I see the figures and the video games and the T-shirts, it’s so satisfying,” Salvatore shares.

“There are also a lot of people the character means something to who have very little familiarity with my books. They just heard about Drizzt, saw some art of the character and think the cat’s cool. And that’s fine with me.”

Group Effort

Drizzt doesn’t stand alone as Salvatore’s latest bestselling trilogy draws to a close. His father Zaknafein and an extended cast of characters must endure a rollicking tale of magic, intrigue, and dangerous thrills, as they consider the eternal questions of morality, purpose, and sacrifice. Can the normally timeless bonds of family and friendship endure?

“Because we’ve reached such a dramatic moment in *Relentless* certain things are revealed about a lot of the other characters. Does Artemis Entreri stand up when push comes to shove? Does Dahlia Syn’dalay take huge risks for other people if she has the choice to save herself instead? I continue to learn more about all of them.”

The series has seen Zaknafein displaced in time and unexpectedly

reunited with his son. And—SPOILER ALERT for those who haven't read *Boundless* yet!—Salvatore reveals that Zaknafein's trips go both ways, transporting Drizzt back in time.

ZAK ATTACK

ZAKNAFEIN DO'URDEN
To celebrate the upcoming release of the final book in the latest Drizzt trilogy, *Dragon+* worked with R.A. Salvatore to create a stat block for the famed weapons master. The following version of the famed weapons master is based on him as he appears in *Relentless*. Enjoy!

ZAKNAFEIN DO'URDEN
Medium humanoid (elf), lawful neutral

Armor Class 21 (+3 shielded leather)
Hit Points 142 (13d8 + 57)
Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

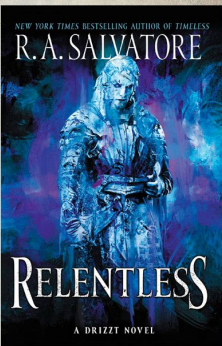
STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	22 (+6)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	12 (+3)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws +10, Con +8
Skills Athletics +15, Intimidation +12, Perception +6, Survival +8
Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16
Languages Common, Elvish, Undercommon
Challenge 16 (13,000 XP)

Fey Ancestry. Zaknafein has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.
Insane Spellcasting. Zaknafein's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 19). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:
At will: *dimming lights* (1/day each: darkness, *ice fire*, *ice storm* (spell only))
Legendary Resistance (1/Day). If Zaknafein fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.
Poison Resistance. Zaknafein has advantage on saving throws against poison.
Second Wind (Recharges after a Short Rest). Zaknafein can use a bonus action to regain 16 (4d6 + 11) hit points.
Special Equipment. Zaknafein wears +3 shielded leather and wields two +3 longswords, a +1 whip, and two +1 daggers. He carries five sun pellets (see the sidebar).
Standing Leap. Zaknafein's long jump is up to 20 feet and his high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

ACTIONS
Multitask. Zaknafein makes three attacks with his +3 longsword or two attacks with his +1 daggers.
+3 Longsword, Mele Weapon Attack: +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target; 1d6 (1d8 + 3) slashing damage.
+1 Whip, Mele Weapon Attack: +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target; 1d4 (1d4 + 7) slashing damage.
+1 Dagger, Mele or Ranged Weapon Attack: +12 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target; 1d6 (1d4 + 7) piercing damage.

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *TIMELESS*
R.A. SALVATORE



RELENTLESS
A DRIZZT NOVEL

SUN PELLET
Wondrous item, very rare
This small ceramic ball is specially coated with enchanted oil. As an action, you can crack a sun pellet or throw it up to 100 feet, whereupon it releases a brilliant magical light. This light is equivalent to a sunburst spell (save DC 15) but has a radius of 20 feet.

REACTIONS
Parry. Zaknafein adds 4 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.
Uncanny Dodge. Zaknafein halves the damage that he takes from an attack that hits him. He must be able to see the attacker.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS
Zaknafein can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Zaknafein regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.
Quick Step. Zaknafein moves up to his speed without provoking opportunity attacks.
Lunging Attack (Costs 2 Actions). Zaknafein makes one +3 longsword attack that has a reach of 10 feet.

DRIZZT TO ZAKNAFEIN DO'URDEN

Drizzt's father Zaknafein Do'Urden features heavily in *Relentless* and *Dragon+* worked closely with author R.A. Salvatore to create a stat block for the famed drow weapons master. Read more about the character in *Dragon+ issue #31*.

Download Zaknafein's stat block

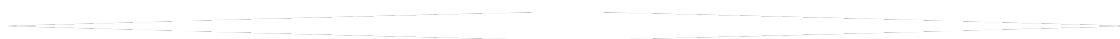
“At the end of *Boundless* it was clear that Drizzt was going to become a character in the past as well. The sections of *Relentless* that deal with the past will be like a retelling of parts of the novel *Homeland*. You'll see some of the things that went on behind the scenes in *Homeland* to facilitate the story that Drizzt experienced.

“I'm really proud of some of the revelations in this story and I can't wait for readers to experience them. There are going to be some massive changes in drow society coming out of the other end of this. I'm stretching and taking more chances and I'm being allowed to take those chances,” Salvatore teases.

“The complications involved in writing these adventures are tremendous and I love that. I haven't even figured out the drow's devious plots that sit underneath the main plot yet, which is the joy of writing drow. It's like doing the *New York Times* crossword puzzle only you're trying to figure out drow words for everything.

Relentless is released by Harper Collins on July 28, 2020 with an

MSRP of \$28.99 and is available **to pre-order now**. The previous two books in the trilogy, *Timeless* and *Boundless*, are both available now.



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ZAKNAFEIN DO'URDEN

To celebrate the upcoming release of the final book in the latest Drizzt trilogy, *Dragon+* worked with R.A. Salvatore to create a stat block for the character of Zaknafein. The following version of the famed weapons master is based on him as he appears in *Relentless*. Enjoy!

ZAKNAFEIN DO'URDEN

Medium humanoid (elf), lawful neutral

Armor Class 21 (+3 studded leather)

Hit Points 142 (19d8 + 57)

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

STR	DEX	CON	INT	WIS	CHA
20 (+5)	22 (+6)	16 (+3)	19 (+4)	12 (+1)	14 (+2)

Saving Throws Str +10, Con +8

Skills Athletics +15, Intimidation +12, Perception +6, Survival +6

Senses darkvision 120 ft., passive Perception 16

Languages Common, Elvish, Undercommon

Challenge 16 (15,000 XP)

Fey Ancestry. Zaknafein has advantage on saving throws against being charmed, and magic can't put him to sleep.

Innate Spellcasting. Zaknafein's spellcasting ability is Charisma (spell save DC 15). He can innately cast the following spells, requiring no material components:

At will: *dancing lights*

1/day each: *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *levitate* (self only)

Legendary Resistance (1/Day). If Zaknafein fails a saving throw, he can choose to succeed instead.

Poison Resilience. Zaknafein has advantage on saving throws against poison.

Second Wind (Recharges after a Short Rest). Zaknafein can use a bonus action to regain 16 (1d10 + 11) hit points.

Special Equipment. Zaknafein wears +3 *studded leather* and wields two +3 *longswords*, a +1 *whip*, and six +1 *daggers*. He carries five *sun pellets* (see the sidebar).

Standing Leap. Zaknafein's long jump is up to 20 feet and his high jump is up to 10 feet, with or without a running start.

ACTIONS

Multiattack. Zaknafein makes three attacks with his +3 *longsword* or two attacks with his +1 *daggers*.

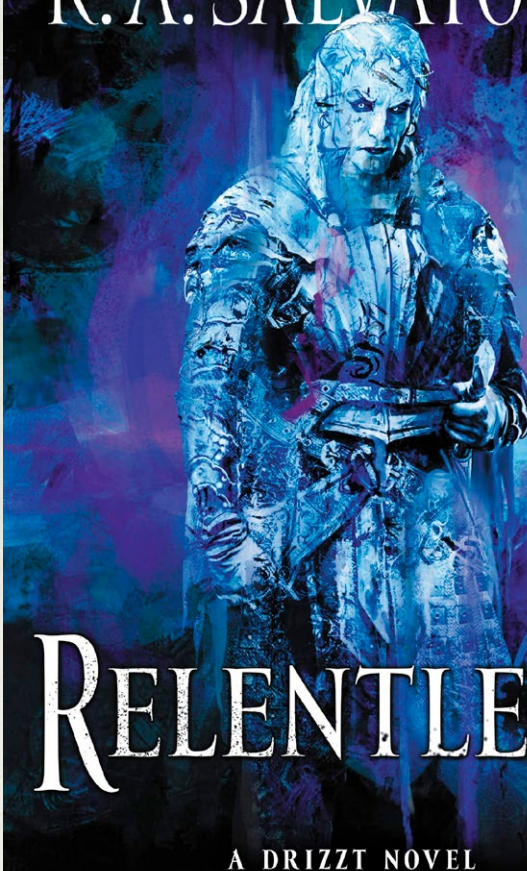
+3 Longsword. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +13 to hit, reach 5 ft., one target. *Hit:* 12 (1d8 + 8) slashing damage.

+1 Whip. *Melee Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 10 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d4 + 7) slashing damage.

+1 Dagger. *Melee or Ranged Weapon Attack:* +12 to hit, reach 5 ft. or range 20/60 ft., one target. *Hit:* 9 (1d4 + 7) piercing damage.

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF *TIMELESS*

R.A. SALVATORE



SUN PELLET

Wondrous item, very rare

This small ceramic ball is specially coated with enchanted oil. As an action, you can crack a *sun pellet* or throw it up to 100 feet, whereupon it releases a brilliant magical light. This light is equivalent to a *sunburst* spell (save DC 15) but has a radius of 20 feet.

REACTIONS

Parry. Zaknafein adds 4 to his AC against one melee attack that would hit him. To do so, he must see the attacker and be wielding a melee weapon.

Uncanny Dodge. Zaknafein halves the damage that he takes from an attack that hits him. He must be able to see the attacker.

LEGENDARY ACTIONS

Zaknafein can take 3 legendary actions, choosing from the options below. Only one legendary action option can be used at a time and only at the end of another creature's turn. Zaknafein regains spent legendary actions at the start of his turn.

Quick Step. Zaknafein moves up to his speed without provoking opportunity attacks.

Lunging Attack (Costs 2 Actions). Zaknafein makes one +3 *longsword* attack that has a reach of 10 feet.

IN THE WORKS



Death Saves Fantasy/Heavy Metal Streetwear

Joe Manganiello's Death Saves store continues to channel its founder's vivid nostalgia and lifelong passions for fantasy and sci-fi through the mediums of metal art, illustration, and typography. And its army of elves—badass drow every one of them, we imagine—has been busier than Tiamat's dentist in the past few months. From powerful gear to incredible jewelry, including a range of intricate pin badges and the store's first official set of dice, there's something for everyone. Visit [the official website](#) to view the full range of Death Saves products.



There are plenty of Dungeons & Dragons celebrities to be found on Death Saves clothing. Infamous wizard Kelek was created in the early '80s as part of a roster of known D&D characters and now graces a T-shirt. Meanwhile, Saint Kargoth the Betrayer isn't officially a D&D collab, but "The King of the Death Knights" (printed here in crisp gold metallic ink on a coach jacket) did originally appear in an issue of *Dragon* magazine. And who doesn't love a beholder, recreated here in all of its ten eye-stalked glory by illustrator Ryan Burgdorfer? Check out the back of that long-sleeve tee to see the array of rays the creature might employ, cleverly incorporating the company name under the "Death" option.

The newest range continues to push the boundaries with some unique designs. A homage to west coast legend Big Daddy Roth, a custom car designer and artist, features Kargoth the Betrayer himself as a hot rod! Can you also spot Gorgorin the Shatterer, Bilious Sphere, the

Arendagrost and other hidden Easter eggs? We also love the deeply mysterious T-shirt featuring cover art from a cursed computer game rumored to exist in the early '80s.

D&D Kelek SS T-shirt, Brick (\$35); Death Knight Coach Jacket, Gold (\$75); D&D Beholder Redux LS T-shirt, Purple (\$42); Death Saves Kustoms T-shirt, Black (\$35); Occult Electronics T-shirt (\$35)



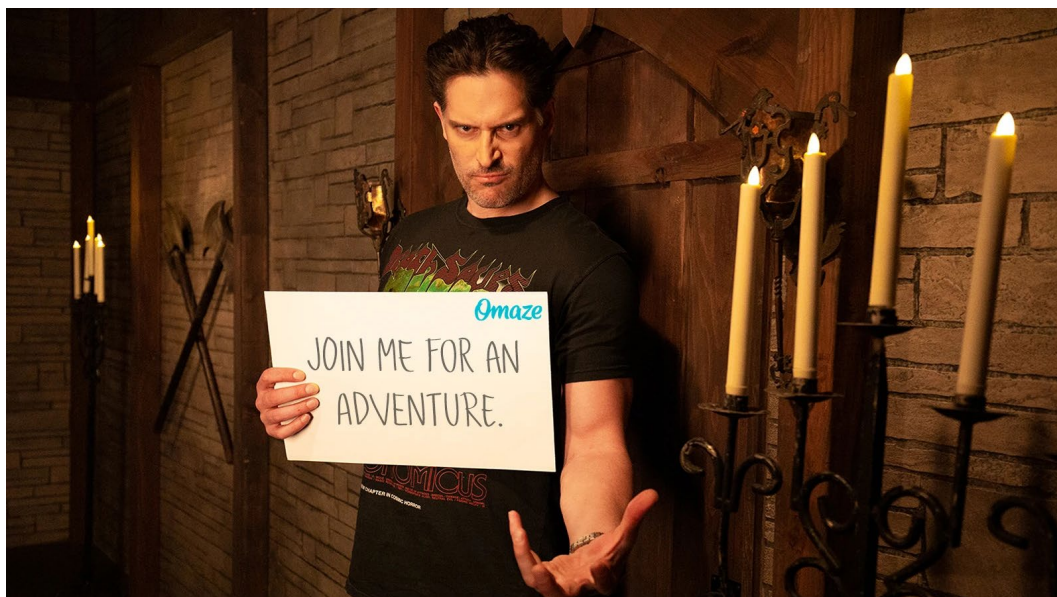
Death Saves has also joined forces with its friends at Norse Foundry to create its first official set of RPG dice. Crafted from eye-catching white gemstone material, they feature the Death Saves skull logo as the highest number on every die. Thanks to the naturally occurring stones, each set is unique!

As if those weren't fancy enough, Death Saves has also released a dice set fit for a Dragon Highlord! This gorgeous multi-colored set of gemstone dice represent the power of the five races of the chromatic dragons and harken back to the very first Creative Publications / Holmes polyhedral dice made in the early-to-mid 1970s (don't worry, Norse Foundry has differentiated 1-10 from 11-20 on the d20 without you having to color the sides in!).

The store's extensive range of pin badges now includes Manganiello's infamous D&D character Arkhan the Cruel, as illustrated by Max Dunbar. The Dragon Highlord and oathbreaker paladin in the service of the five-headed dragon goddess Tiamat is also available as a sew-on patch, as well as an incredible pendant (made by master craftsman Geoff Thomas) that Joe himself has often been seen wearing.

Meanwhile, the Cursed Skull of the Dragon Wizard Ring (also by Thomas and made to order) carries on that tradition of insanely detailed custom jewelry.

Death Dice, White Gemstone (\$90); Arkhan the Cruel Chromatic Colored Five-Dice Set with Black Metal Coffin (\$125); Arkhan the Cruel, Red (Patch \$10, Enamel Pin \$12); Arkhan the Cruel Pendant (\$1,250); Cursed Skull of the Dragon Wizard Ring (Silver \$495, Duality \$1,095)



PLAY D&D WITH JOE MANGANIELLO!

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The Write Stuff: Dan Abnett

An image of a tabletop strewn with old-school D&D material helps explain how Dan Abnett became the writer he is today. Dragon+ went behind the photo to find out more.

by Matt Chapman



(photo by James K. Barnett)

ome are born to write, some achieve the status of a writer, while others have the position thrust upon them. Comic-book creator

S

and novelist Dan Abnett (*Guardians of the Galaxy*, *Justice League*) falls into that first category. He started off as a writer at Marvel UK working on *The Real Ghostbusters*, before writing comics for Marvel US, DC and 2000 AD and adding fifty-plus tie-in novels and a handful of video games to his portfolio. His childhood interests fueled his imagination from an early age, and as he began to embrace those passions, they helped mold him into the man he is today.



“There are a few pivotal things that guided my childhood. One was *2000 AD*, a comic-book I’ve now spent decades writing for. Another is Forbidden Planet, the store where I got access to all the comics that I wanted to read,” Abnett recalls, aware that he now holds the record for the most signings at the company’s flagship London store. “And the other was Games Workshop because it sold roleplaying games.”

“I’ve spent the past three decades as a freelance writer and I’m quite prolific. I firmly believe the reason I’m able to think on my feet and generate ideas very quickly comes from that childhood love of comics and roleplaying games, Dungeons & Dragons in particular,” he continues.

“My two favorite things were writing and drawing, so when I discovered comics around the age of eight or nine I realized I could do both at the same time. That misspent youth creating my own comics inevitably led to a life working with them. I was also the Dungeon Master for D&D, and we seldom followed set scenarios. Instead I would build things and tailor them to the players, sometimes entirely spontaneously. I got used to making up stories on the fly and keeping track of all the characters and the things we were inventing so I could build plots around them. That was an invaluable grounding for a writing career. I look at Dungeon Mastering as part of my

apprenticeship.”



Improvisation is still a big part of Abnett’s work. Although he might be commissioned to write anything from *Aquaman* to a *Doctor Who* comic book, he can’t begin that task until he’s provided a multi-issue arc of the story he’s proposing to tell. Even within that framework, there’s still room for interpretation.

“You know that the finer points aren’t set. You’ve got your overall structure, which in D&D terms is your dungeon, then along the way you’ll throw in lots of little extras. Every editor I’ve ever worked for has been given the basics they need to know so they can approve the storyline, with an often-unspoken understanding that a certain amount of improvisation will happen,” he explains.

“Back in the day you might be asked to come up with plots for twelve issues or more, and my argument was always that I’m not going to have all the great ideas for a *Punisher* storyline in one afternoon. Instead, here’s a basic shape but I reserve the right to develop and possibly even leave that plotline. Some of the best things I’ve written I’ve been halfway through knowing exactly what my destination is and suddenly realized, ‘Wow, I could do this instead!’ Because the idea is spontaneous and is usually even better than the one I’d been

working towards I know the novelty of it will have an immediacy and come across as fresh. I'm always open to that."

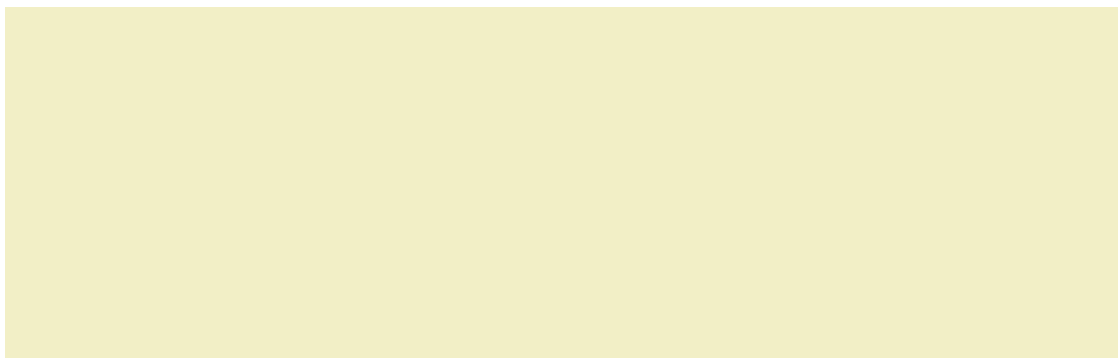
BREAKING COMIC CONVENTIONS

One of Abnett's biggest claims to fame is that he wrote the *Guardians of the Galaxy* comic which was turned into the Marvel movie ("It was a great film and I got to go on set and meet the cast") but that's the tip of the iceberg when it comes to his output. His notable work for DC includes *Legion of Super-Heroes*, *Aquaman* ("I wrote the fifty issues that finished just before the movie came out"), *Titans*, and currently *Justice League: Odyssey* ("science fiction is my thing and that's a cosmic adventure"). He's also writing Dynamite's *John Carter* series, centered on a female lead, and Valiant's futuristic samurai *Rai*.



(Guardians of the Galaxy #1)

"I grew up reading *John Carter, Warlord of Mars* so when I got a call from Dynamite asking if I'd like to write a comic based on Dejah Thoris, I was thrilled! Working on Barsoom is like being asked to do Tolkien, that's a really big deal. And there was excitement when I realized within moments of thinking about it that I could remember all of the continuity of that series, like the notes of some long-lost D&D campaign that I'd been running. I could remember Barsoom almost better than I could Tolkien or Frank Herbert's works."





2000 AD: A USER GUIDE

“2000 AD is a peculiarly British thing. It’s a completely different tradition of comic book. It’s quite satirical in places and its DNA is closer to the great bande dessinée comics from France and Belgium. Launched in 1977, it tended to be weekly and be full of anthology stories, as opposed to the American format of being monthly and containing a single story,” Dan Abnett explains. “It’s the birthplace of Judge Dredd but also many other classic characters such as Slaine, Strontium Dog, and Rogue Trooper. 2000 AD presents five or six strips every week and one of them

almost always features Judge Dredd. These strips are five-page installments that are ongoing science fiction stories. They tend not be very superhero focused, although there have been notable exceptions to that. I first read it as a kid and I realize that I've now been writing for *2000 AD* for longer than I was a reader of it."

Some of Abnett's most interesting work has appeared in the pages of British science fiction comic *2000 AD*. Having written strips for its major characters, he earned the chance to create his own strips for the weekly anthology comic and embraced the opportunity. This year marks the twenty-fifth anniversary of *Sinister Dexter* (following the exploits of two futuristic hit men), while his strips *Kingdom* (a sword and sorcery tale that is actually post-apocalyptic, featuring Conan-esque warriors genetically created using dogs), *Grey Area* (set in the Arizona hub where aliens are processed before they're allowed anywhere else on Earth), and *Lawless* (a space western appearing in *Judge Dredd Magazine*, following a female judge acting as Marshall in a colonial town on an alien colony) are all still running.



(*Sinister Dexter* #1)

"I try to never do the same thing twice. If you removed the credits from *2000 AD* people wouldn't be able to guess that all the things I've written were by the same person, because I write them in a different voice. I'm always trying to find a different thing, and *2000 AD* provides that opportunity to experiment. *Sinister Dexter* is very silly, a flippant, semi-humor strip, sitting alongside other really serious strips," Abnett tells Dragon+.

"About three years ago I created a *2000 AD* strip called *Brink* with the artist Ian Culbard. Our pitch was that it's a gritty police procedural set in a space station—*True Detective* meets *Outland*. We

almost hesitated pitching it to *2000 AD* because it's very slow, atmospheric and talky, and didn't have the usual *2000 AD* in-your-face excitement. When things did happen in the strip, they happened quickly and were very brief. We're about to start work on the fifth series of *Brink* and for the past two years it's been voted the most popular strip in *2000 AD*. It's has an immense atmosphere and the readers have obviously taken to it."

MANY DANS MAKE LIGHT WORK

Given Abnett's diverse workload, variety is very much the spice of life. With so much on his plate at any one time it's surprising there's enough of him to go around, although if his fans are to be believed there might already be a few **Manshoon**-style clones wandering the Earth.

"One of the things I've always done is worked on lots of things at the same time. That way I never get bored. I love writing novels, I've written video games such as *Alien: Isolation*, I've got several things brewing for television... but I couldn't ever walk away from comics because I love them so much," he says.



(Alien Isolation)

"As my work is so wide-ranging, I'd go to signings and cons and meet a Marvel fan wanting to talk about *Guardians of the Galaxy*, a fan of my *Warhammer* novels, and a *2000 AD* fan keen to talk about *Sinister Dexter* and *Kingdom*, and none of them had read any of the

other things I wrote. I've even had people come up to me and say, 'I love your work on *Superman*, did you know there's also a Dan Abnett who writes for Marvel?' Yes, it's me!"

Aside from the few years he was signed exclusively to DC, Abnett's always been allowed to write for both major comic companies as a freelancer. That ability to work for the world's two largest comic publishers has occasionally given him incredible, money-can't-buy access to major in-world events.

"About a decade ago, I knew big, fundamental secrets about Marvel's publishing plans for the next year because I was working on the company's huge event at the time and I was involved in script conferences. I then got a call from an agent working with DC who said they had some work. I told them I was working for Marvel and all they asked was, 'Can you fit it in?' I said I could and suddenly I was roped into Marvel's big Flashpoint event. I was probably one of the few people in the world who knew the big reveals of both of the Marvel and DC events at the same time!"

D&DAN

"I used to say that the only two significant franchises I've never written for are *Star Wars* and *The Simpsons*," Abnett jokes, although he can add Dungeons & Dragons to that list. What's surprising about that omission is Abnett's deep experience with the tabletop roleplaying game. He first played close to the time D&D originally appeared in the UK, estimating 1979 or 1980 as the year he initially rolled a dice. Having moved schools he made a new friend in class who had the *D&D White Box* and the pair taught themselves to play using that small, original edition.

"I was hooked immediately and I bought the UK licensed version from Games Workshop as soon as I was able to. It was a blue book in a dragon-covered box—which I still have! I was a very enthusiastic player all through my school days, which is where all my supplements, my dungeon floor plans, and my appallingly painted figure collection came from. I also had a few prepared dungeons, although we preferred to make stuff up and didn't follow that many written scenarios."

The roleplaying bug followed Abnett to university but became more

sporadic as time went on. A familiar path back into the game was opened up when he taught his young daughters to play, buying the 1983 *Red Box Starter Set* to play with them. In more recent times, he's run games for a good friend and his friend's two boys, aged 11 and 13.

"For a laugh one day my friend said, 'Let's play D&D', so we started playing again. We've now had quite a few sessions where the four of us are playing and we're creating this very silly campaign. It's silly as much as all early games are when you're teaching people to play. The names the kids picked for their characters were very funny to begin with," he says.

"Inevitably the clichés abound. I took them to a tavern and they helped the owner clean out his basement, which had rats in it. But once we got going, they started to revise their characters and believe in them more. Although neither of the boys changed their names, they wrote backstories to explain that their silly names were actually nicknames. Their refinement and sophistication grew the more these characters became real."

Away from the basement room where Abnett keeps file copies of his work (but no rats!), he's always creating. Wherever he goes, he carries a notebook to write things down, no matter where that inspiration might eventually find a home.

"I'm a professional gun-for-hire writer rather than a fiction novelist, but I still believe in that flow of imagination and that you should follow wherever the muse takes you. The world is full of wonderful synchronicities and once you start thinking about something, another really odd thing may pop into your head and you'll realize that's a great connection you can use.

"When I note something down it could be used in the next *Justice League* comic, in *2000 AD* or the next time I play D&D. But it'll be a good idea and eventually it'll go pop and you'll know where it fits. That's about being receptive to the readership in the same way you'd be receptive to your players in D&D. When something captures their imagination, you put a little bit more of it in there."

TABLETOP TALES

They say a picture is worth a thousand words and it was a single image that brought Abnett to *Dragon+*'s attention: **his tabletop filled with classic D&D publications**. Lead miniatures, an original *Monster Manual*, paper character sheets, DM map sketches, boxed dungeon floor plan tiles—it was a vision of old-school gaming. The only issue internet onlookers raised was in the placement of that *Monster Manual*, which lay open and faced-down on the table.



“When I meet people and they hand me something to sign and they say, ‘I’m sorry it’s a bit scruffy,’ I take that as a compliment if it’s because it’s been well-read. But I’m surrounded by books and I’m ridiculously respectful of them,” he says.

“I have an impressive RPG shelf containing all of the different editions I’ve collected over the years. My placement of the *Monster Manual* was purely because we were in the middle of a game and I

hadn't brought my DM screen with me. I had all my maps out and I didn't want to let my players see, so boom I put that book down to cover them. It was only like that for a few seconds while I took the photograph. Someone left a comment on Facebook saying, 'That is a terrible way to leave that book' and Gary Gygax's son Luke agreed! I appreciate that, and that was my bad."

"However, I do know of one instance where I can forgive such behavior. I was at a signing in Toronto and I met the crew of a Canadian Army tank who had been deployed in Afghanistan. It had come under heavy fire and had gone hull-down to half-bury itself and sit out the bombardment. The four-man crew were in there for hours waiting for it to be over. The Commander pulled a copy of one of my *Gaunt's Ghosts* books out of his pocket and started to read.

"When he got a quarter of the way through the book he tore the front quarter off and gave it to the gunner so there were two of them reading. Eventually the book was in four pieces and all four of the crew were reading, making this unpleasant experience go a lot faster. They came to see me to say thank you for getting them through a tough moment and presented me with the Canadian flag that had been flying on the radio mast of the tank. It was such a cool thing to hear I completely forgive everything they did to the book."

You can connect with Dan Abnett and see more of his work by following him on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

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Young Adventurer's Guides: Beasts & Behemoths

The beasts are unleashed in the latest D&D guide aimed at younger adventurers.

by Jane Hoskyn

Nothing fires young imaginations quite like ghoulish creatures. The childhood fascination with monsters is embedded in pop culture—from Godzilla’s extended menagerie and the creepy goings on in *Goosebumps* to *Stranger Things*. It’s no wonder kids are so skilled at dreaming up fantastical fiends while sitting at (and under) the kitchen table.

It’s fitting then that the fifth installment of the *Dungeons & Dragons Young Adventurer’s Guides* series of books devotes every page to the monsters of D&D and mythical legend. Prepare for those imaginations to be fired up as *Beasts & Behemoths* brilliantly taps into younger readers’ natural ability to conjure up extraordinary creatures.



(Select to watch)

INSPIRING YOUNG ADVENTURERS

As with its predecessors in the *Young Adventurer’s Guides* series, *Beasts & Behemoths* aims to inspire roleplaying and promote

storytelling rather than explain the nuts and bolts of the Dungeons & Dragons roleplaying system. It achieves that by respecting its younger audience, and the series’ ability to appeal across the generations is a direct result of Zub’s own experience at a younger age as an avid reader of comic books.

“Stan Lee used to say he wouldn’t write down to the readers of Marvel Comics. He would use language and words he felt were appropriate and exciting. If you saw a word you didn’t know, you’d go look it up and you’d expand your vocabulary to meet the challenge. That’s the way it was for me, growing up,” Zub explains.

“We don’t make our books overly complex but equally we don’t need to over-simplify the language either. We’ve written at a level we feel is clear and communicates ideas well but we don’t hold back on using cool terminology either.”

That attitude has helped the *Young Adventurers Guides* become an entertaining and enjoyable read for fans of all ages. “The books are ostensibly for younger readers aged eight to twelve but the feedback we’ve gotten is that they work well for anybody. You can give these books to readers of any age, most of whom have never played D&D before, and they’ll understand the options available to them.”

MINOTAUR



SIZE Minotaurs can grow to as much as twice the height of the average human, though they sometimes slouch if the ceilings are low.

DO THIS

Dodge. You're probably a lot smaller than the minotaur, which can be an advantage when avoiding attacks.

Leave a trail. Markings or a long rope can help you find your way back out again. Just hope that no one messes with your trail.

DON'T DO THIS

Don't go into a labyrinth. The best way to avoid a minotaur is to never enter a maze.

Don't get lost. As soon as you get lost in a labyrinth, you're at the minotaur's mercy.

If you ever find yourself turning down endless corridors or pathways that seem to lead nowhere and you hear a snort of breath or a low rumble of hooves, get ready to run or fight. You're in a maze, and there's a minotaur nearby.

Minotaurs are huge, muscular creatures with giant horns and animal features that resemble a bull, though they can be any gender. The labyrinths they occupy serve as a sort of sacrificial temple to their dark god, the Horned King, who created the first minotaurs by transforming loyal followers into beastly monsters.

Minotaurs serve their master by spilling the blood of anyone foolish enough to enter their maze. They're fast and strong, and their first attack will often involve trampling you into the ground!

LAIR Minotaurs don't have to live in labyrinths, but they will if they're faithful servants of their god. Don't assume that all labyrinths look the same. Some are stone-walled corridors, but natural caves, forests of twisted trees, or the winding ruins of an abandoned palace can also be made into mazes by a minotaur.

LABYRINTHINE MEMORY Minotaurs can live their whole lives inside labyrinths, waiting for the unwary to step inside, and they are masters of the maze. They remember every turn and every path of their homes, and they always know exactly where they are. They also have excellent senses, so they know where you are too.

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LARGE & HUGE

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MORE MONSTERS

Beasts & Behemoths isn't the first time lead author Jim Zub and his writers Stacy King and Andrew Wheeler have explored monsters. The series' second book, *Monsters & Creatures*, provided an insight into encounters that might cause trouble for adventurers—from creatures that live underground or dwell in the wilderness to those that stalk boneyards or soar in the sky. Its glorious full-page illustrations and descriptions of giants, dragons, and vampires ran alongside a handful of named legendary creatures from D&D canon, such as Ravenloft's Strahd von Zarovich. But there are no end of iconic creatures to explore in D&D and *Beasts & Behemoths* includes entries as varied as wereboar and metallic dragons, following on from the chromatic dragons of *Monsters & Creatures*.

“We have dragons in there again, but this time readers get to see a whole other side of them,” says Zub. “And we reinforce that creature encounters don't just have to be about combat. They can be about discovery, interactions, trying to stop combat from happening, or trying to work your way through social situations. Those encounters are just as valid as rolling initiative and attacking.”

UMBER HULK



CONFUSING GAZE The hypnotic powers of the umber hulk can strike anyone close enough to see its eyes. Anyone who falls under its magic gaze will be temporarily unable to move, or will move in a random direction, or sometimes even lash out wildly at the people around them, even if those people are their closest friends.

SIZE UMBER HULKS grow to about eight feet tall, which means their antennae would probably brush the ceiling of the rooms in your home.

Parents in the Underdark tell their children scary stories about the umber hulk. If you don't finish your dinner and do your chores, the umber hulk will get you.

There are a few reasons why these large bug-like creatures are so scary. First, they have deadly claws and mandibles for crushing their prey. Second, they have an armored hide made from a tough substance called chitin. Third, they want to eat you up!

More terrifying than any of that, however, are their eyes. The gaze of an umber hulk can scramble your mind. UMBER HULKS like to find a place to hide where they can jump out and surprise passing prey, and one glance can leave their victims stunned, unable to run away or even defend themselves.

People who have survived an umber hulk attack are often those who didn't see the creature at all, just the carnage it created. That's why people tell scary stories about the horrible monster that lurks in the dark that few people ever live to see.

LAIR UMBER HULKS nest in underground burrows, but you're more likely to find them lying in wait for unsuspecting passersby in nooks and crannies in the rocks—or, more accurately, they're more likely to find you.

DO THIS

Pay attention in the Underdark. UMBER HULKS lie in wait for their prey, so your best hope is to notice where they're hiding before they jump out at you.

Look away. You are safe from the umber hulk's gaze so long as you don't look at the creature.

DON'T DO THIS

Don't just look away. If you're not looking at the umber hulk, it will try to attack you with its claws and mandibles!

Don't hurt your friends. If your friends attack you because of an umber hulk encounter, remember it's not their fault. Try to disarm or contain them!

(Select to view)

MAGICAL MIX

Beasts & Behemoths also embraces the mythic world beyond D&D, covering legendary creatures that new players of all ages may recognize from fantasy and folklore.

“We’ve got medusa, the minotaur, and sphinxes, so we’re touching on some of those creatures everyone knows from mythology,” says Zub. “Mixed in with those are monsters that feel very specific to D&D, for example, umber hulks, the demilich, and the really kooky, creepy cranium rats.”

Having introduced D&D critters by location in *Monsters & Creatures*, the writing team opted to organize *Beasts & Behemoths*’ inhabitants by size. That decision smartly echoes the order in which new players are more likely to encounter creatures when playing D&D.

“We start at the tiny and small size category, move through medium, then large, huge and all the way up to gargantuan. As a reader you get to build up to the biggest creatures in the D&D canon, and understand them in the context of their size, threat, and scope,” says Zub, admitting that some readers are more likely to skip ahead as the monsters get bigger. “I know some kids love flipping through the book, seeing a really cool piece of artwork and jumping to that to get details of a particular creature. But there’s a nice thematic build-up in terms of epic adventure for those that want it.”



(Select to view)

DON'T I KNOW YOU?

The illustrations in *The Young Adventurer's Guide* series have often featured a legendary group of characters and Zub and his team have kindly created first level versions of some of those for *Dragon+* (download the PDFs using the links on this page). But don't be surprised to see a few other familiar faces show up in *Beasts & Behemoths*' elaborate illustrations. Zub says one of the things he's most proud of is the way the series brings in characters from other sources.

"I love being able to introduce characters from the D&D comic books to new readers. Minsc and Boo are iconic so it's no surprise seeing them, but Krydle, Shandie, and a couple of other characters from the comic series show up in multiple D&D publications and they've also made their way into a few illustrations in *Beasts & Behemoths*."

"We've also included the first characters created for the card game *Dungeon Mayhem* in a couple of illustrations. Not in a cartoony way, more in the painterly, realistic style we use in the *Young Adventurers* books. We might not know very much about them but we have their

visuals and they're named characters so we thought it would be fun to inject them into as many cool places as we can as part of the bigger D&D world."

CHARACTER STAT BLOCKS

The forest gnome warlock, human bard, and kenku monk will be a familiar sight to anyone who has poured over the illustrations in *The Young Adventurer's Guides* series. Jim Zub and the team have created [Zanizyre Clockguard](#), [Florizan Blank](#), and [Whey-shu](#) as first level characters for *Dragon+* readers to download and play in their games or for DMs to use as NPCs.

[Download forest gnome warlock Zanizyre Clockguard](#)

[Download human bard Florizan Blank](#)

[Download kenku monk Whey-shu](#)

The D&D *Young Adventurer's Guide: Beasts & Behemoths* is released by Penguin Random House on October 20, 2020 and is [available for pre-order now](#) with an MSRP of \$12.99. The previous D&D *Young Adventurer's Guides* [Warriors & Weapons](#), [Monsters & Creatures](#), [Dungeons & Tombs](#), and [Wizards & Spells](#) are currently on sale and will be released as a four-book boxed set in October.

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Unearthed Arcana: Subclasses Revisited

Sharing new playtest possibilities for the rogue, warlock, and wizard.

By Jeremy Crawford, Dan Dillon, Ben Petrisor, with Bill Benham, Adam Lee, Taymoor Rehman, and F. Wesley Schneider



Playtest Material

The material here is presented for playtesting and to spark your imagination. These game mechanics are in draft form, usable in your campaign but not refined by final game development and editing. They aren't officially part of the game and aren't permitted in D&D Adventurers League events.

If we decide to make this material official, it will be refined based on your feedback, and then it will appear in a D&D book.

Three subclasses have reappeared in *Unearthed Arcana* following player feedback. The Phantom updates the rogue subclass previously called the Revived; The Genie is a revised version of the Noble Genie warlock subclass; and Order of Scribes reimagines the artificer Archivist subclass for the wizard.



Rogue: Phantom

Many rogues walk a fine line between life and death, risking their own lives and taking the lives of others. Some even discover a mystical connection to death itself, as echoes of those who have died begin to cling to them. Phantom rogues may eventually become so immersed in negative energy they become like ghosts, making them highly prized within thieves' guilds as information gatherers and spies.

At lower levels such rogues can borrow skills from the dead as ghostly presences share knowledge with them, making them proficient in one skill or tool of their choice. At higher levels the Phantom is able to snatch a token from a departing soul when a life ends in their presence. This sliver of life essence takes physical form as a soul trinket that gives advantage on death saving throws and Constitution saving throws. As an action, the rogue can destroy a soul trinket and ask one question of the spirit associated with it.

The Phantom can also cause deathly wailing as they nudge someone closer to the grave, damaging another nearby creature when they deal Sneak Attack damage to their target. At higher levels this ability deals the additional psychic damage to both the first and the second creature.

This rogue subclass eventually learns to phase partially into the realm of the dead, becoming like a ghost. While in this spectral form they

can hover, have a flying speed of 10 feet, and attack rolls against them are made at disadvantage.



Warlock: the Genie

This warlock subclass has made a pact with a noble genie. Rare among their kind, such entities are rulers of vast fiefs on the Elemental Planes and they have great influence over lesser genies and elemental creatures. Noble genies are varied in their motivations but all are arrogant and wield power that rivals lesser deities. Each kind of genie (dao, djinni, efreeti, or marid) is

associated with a particular element and their followers can choose from an expanded list of relevant spells. At higher levels the warlocks who make these pacts begin to take on the characteristics of their patron, gaining resistance to certain kinds of damage (bludgeoning for dao, thunder for djinni, fire for efreeti, or cold for marid). They can also gain a flying speed of 30 feet for 10 minutes as a bonus action.

The Genie subclass also receives a magical vessel as a gift from its patron, granting them a measure of the genie's power. This tiny object can be used as a spellcasting focus for warlock spells, dealing extra damage equal to their proficiency bonus when they hit with an attack roll. While the warlock is touching the vessel, they can magically vanish and enter it. At higher levels they can invite up to five willing creatures to join them and everyone who remains within the vessel for at least 10 minutes gains the benefit of a short rest (adding additional hit points if they spend hit dice).

Warlocks who progress to high levels can entreat their patron to grant them a *limited* wish, fulfilling the traditional role of a genie in folklore. The warlock gains the effect of one spell of 6th level or lower from any class's spell list without needing to meet the requirements of that spell, including costly components.



Wizard: Order of Scribes

It's rare to see a wizard traveling without books and scrolls sprouting from their bags, and a wizard would go to great lengths to plumb an archive of ancient knowledge. The primary mission of a wizard subscribing to the Order of Scribes Arcane Tradition is to record magical discoveries in tomes and scrolls so that wizardry can flourish.

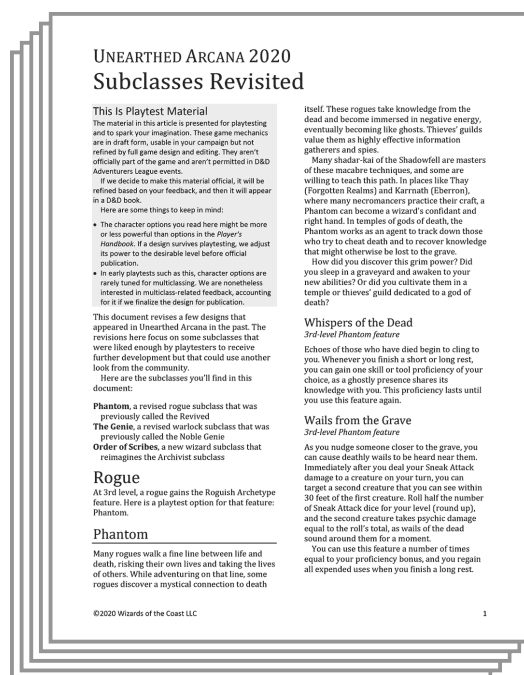
These wizards can create a writing quill that doesn't require ink to function. The gold and time they must spend to copy a spell into their spellbook is halved when using this quill. At higher levels they can use it to transcribe one 1st or 2nd level spell with a

casting time of one action from their spellbook to a scroll. Once in the scroll, the spell's power is enhanced to one level higher than usual and they (but no-one else) can cast it by reading the scroll as an action.

While every wizard values their spellbook, an Order of Scribes wizard tries to turn theirs into a trusted companion by awakening an arcane sentience within it. This *awakened spellbook* can be used as a spellcasting focus and the caster can temporarily replace the damage type of one spell with another that appears within the same pages. Once per long rest they can also cast a ritual spell using that spell's normal casting time.

At higher levels these wizards can conjure forth the mind of the *awakened spellbook* as a tiny spectral construct, which looks like a ghostly tome and can hear and see. They can cast wizard spells as if they were in the spectral mind's space, instead of their own, a number

of times each day. At higher levels while they are holding the book and its spectral mind is manifest, they can use an action to *teleport* and swap places with it.



If a high-level Order of Scribes wizard dies but at least one spell remains in their *awakened spellbook*, they can return to life one minute later within five feet of the book. They revive with one hit point and roll 3d6. The book then loses spells of their choice that have a combined spell level equal to that roll or higher. Short of returning them using a wish spell, the wizard is then incapable of casting those lost spells, even if they find them on a scroll or in another spellbook.

Access the new playtest options for the rogue, warlock, and wizard by downloading the PDF.

DOWNLOAD THE PDF NOW

To see the full treasure trove of *Unearthed Arcana* articles, covering new classes and feats, conversions of rules from previous editions, and much more, **visit the archive**.

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UNEARTHED ARCANA 2020

Subclasses Revisited

This Is Playtest Material

The material in this article is presented for playtesting and to spark your imagination. These game mechanics are in draft form, usable in your campaign but not refined by full game design and editing. They aren't officially part of the game and aren't permitted in D&D Adventurers League events.

If we decide to make this material official, it will be refined based on your feedback, and then it will appear in a D&D book.

Here are some things to keep in mind:

- The character options you read here might be more or less powerful than options in the *Player's Handbook*. If a design survives playtesting, we adjust its power to the desirable level before official publication.
- In early playtests such as this, character options are rarely tuned for multiclassing. We are nonetheless interested in multiclass-related feedback, accounting for it if we finalize the design for publication.

This document revises a few designs that appeared in *Unearthed Arcana* in the past. The revisions here focus on some subclasses that were liked enough by playtesters to receive further development but that could use another look from the community.

Here are the subclasses you'll find in this document:

Phantom, a revised rogue subclass that was previously called the Revived

The Genie, a revised warlock subclass that was previously called the Noble Genie

Order of Scribes, a new wizard subclass that reimagines the Archivist subclass

Rogue

At 3rd level, a rogue gains the Roguish Archetype feature. Here is a playtest option for that feature: Phantom.

Phantom

Many rogues walk a fine line between life and death, risking their own lives and taking the lives of others. While adventuring on that line, some rogues discover a mystical connection to death

itself. These rogues take knowledge from the dead and become immersed in negative energy, eventually becoming like ghosts. Thieves' guilds value them as highly effective information gatherers and spies.

Many shadar-kai of the Shadowfell are masters of these macabre techniques, and some are willing to teach this path. In places like Thay (Forgotten Realms) and Karrnath (Eberron), where many necromancers practice their craft, a Phantom can become a wizard's confidant and right hand. In temples of gods of death, the Phantom works as an agent to track down those who try to cheat death and to recover knowledge that might otherwise be lost to the grave.

How did you discover this grim power? Did you sleep in a graveyard and awaken to your new abilities? Or did you cultivate them in a temple or thieves' guild dedicated to a god of death?

Whispers of the Dead

3rd-level Phantom feature

Echoes of those who have died begin to cling to you. Whenever you finish a short or long rest, you can gain one skill or tool proficiency of your choice, as a ghostly presence shares its knowledge with you. This proficiency lasts until you use this feature again.

Wails from the Grave

3rd-level Phantom feature

As you nudge someone closer to the grave, you can cause deathly wails to be heard near them. Immediately after you deal your Sneak Attack damage to a creature on your turn, you can target a second creature that you can see within 30 feet of the first creature. Roll half the number of Sneak Attack dice for your level (round up), and the second creature takes psychic damage equal to the roll's total, as wails of the dead sound around them for a moment.

You can use this feature a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Tokens of the Departed

9th-level Phantom feature

When a life ends in your presence, you're able to snatch a token from the departing soul, a sliver of its life essence that takes physical form: as a reaction when a creature you can see dies within 30 feet of you, you open your free hand and a Tiny trinket appears there, a soul trinket. The DM chooses the trinket's form or has you roll on the Trinkets table in the *Player's Handbook* to determine it.

While the soul trinket is on your person, you have advantage on death saving throws and Constitution saving throws, as your vitality is enhanced by the life essence within the object.

You can have a maximum number of soul trinkets equal to your proficiency bonus, and you can't create one while at your maximum.

As an action, you can destroy one of your soul trinkets, no matter where it's located. When you do so, you can ask the spirit associated with the trinket one question. The spirit appears to you and answers in a language it knew in life. It's under no obligation to be truthful, and it answers as concisely as possible, eager to be free.

Ghost Walk

13th-level Phantom feature

You can now phase partially into the realm of the dead, becoming like a ghost. As a bonus action, you assume a spectral form. While in this form, you have a flying speed of 10 feet, you can hover, and attack rolls have disadvantage against you. You can also move through creatures and objects as if they were difficult terrain, but you take 1d10 force damage if you end your turn inside a creature or an object.

You stay in this form for 10 minutes or until you end it as a bonus action. To use this feature

again, you must finish a long rest or destroy one of your soul trinkets as part of the bonus action you use to activate Ghost Walk.

Death Knell

17th-level Phantom feature

When you use your Wails from the Grave feature, you can now deal the psychic damage to both the first and the second creature.

Warlock

At 1st level, a warlock gains the Otherworldly Patron feature. Here is a playtest option for that feature: the Genie.

The Genie

You have made a pact with one of the rarest kinds of genie, a noble genie. Such entities are rulers of vast fiefs on the Elemental Planes and have great influence over lesser genies and elemental creatures. Noble genies are varied in their motivations but are all arrogant and wield power that rivals that of lesser deities. They delight in turning the table on mortals who so love to bind genies into servitude, readily entering into pacts that expand their reach across the multiverse.

You choose your patron's kind or determine it randomly, using the Genie Kind table. Each kind of genie is associated with a particular element, as shown in the table.

Genie Kind

d4	Kind	Element
1	Dao	Earth
2	Djinni	Air
3	Efreeti	Fire
4	Marid	Water

Genie Expanded Spells

Spell Level	Genie Spells	Dao Spells	Djinni Spells	Efreeti Spells	Marid Spells
1st	<i>detect evil and good</i>	<i>sanctuary</i>	<i>thunderwave</i>	<i>burning hands</i>	<i>fog cloud</i>
2nd	<i>phantasmal force</i>	<i>spike growth</i>	<i>gust of wind</i>	<i>scorching ray</i>	<i>blur</i>
3rd	<i>create food and water</i>	<i>meld into stone</i>	<i>wind wall</i>	<i>fireball</i>	<i>sleet storm</i>
4th	<i>phantasmal killer</i>	<i>stone shape</i>	<i>greater invisibility</i>	<i>fire shield</i>	<i>control water</i>
5th	<i>creation</i>	<i>wall of stone</i>	<i>seeming</i>	<i>flame strike</i>	<i>cone of cold</i>
9th	<i>wish</i>	—	—	—	—

Expanded Spell List

1st-level Genie feature

The Genie lets you choose from an expanded list of spells when you learn a warlock spell. The Genie Expanded Spells table shows the genie spells that are added to the warlock spell list for you, along with the spells associated in the table with your patron's kind: dao, djinni, efreeti, or marid.

Genie's Vessel

1st-level Genie feature

Your patron gifts you a magical vessel that grants you a measure of the genie's power. The vessel is a Tiny object, and you can use it as a spellcasting focus for your warlock spells. You decide what the object is, or you can determine what it is randomly by rolling on the Genie's Vessel table.

Genie's Vessel

d6	Vessel
1	Oil lamp
2	Urn
3	Ring with a compartment
4	Stoppered bottle
5	Hollow statuette
6	Ornate lantern

While you are touching the vessel, you can use it in the following ways:

Bottled Respite. As an action, you can magically vanish and enter your vessel, which remains in the space you left. The interior of the vessel is an extradimensional space in the shape of a 20-foot-radius cylinder, 20 feet high, and resembles your vessel. The interior is comfortably appointed with cushions and low tables and is a comfortable temperature. While inside, you can hear the area around your vessel as if you were in its space. You can remain inside the vessel up to a number of hours equal to twice your proficiency bonus. You exit the vessel early if you use a bonus action to leave, if you die, or if the vessel is destroyed. When you exit the vessel, you appear in the unoccupied space closest to it. Any objects left in the vessel remain there until carried out, and if the vessel is destroyed, every object stored there harmlessly appears in the unoccupied spaces closest to the vessel's

former space. Once you enter the vessel, you can't enter again until you finish a long rest.

Genie's Wrath. Once during each of your turns when you hit with an attack roll, you can deal extra damage to the target equal to your proficiency bonus. The type of this damage is determined by your patron: bludgeoning (dao), thunder (djinni), fire (efreeti), or cold (marid).

The vessel's AC equals your spell save DC. Its hit points equal your warlock level plus your proficiency bonus, and it is immune to poison and psychic damage.

If the vessel is destroyed or you lose it, you can perform a 1-hour ceremony to receive a replacement from your patron. This ceremony can be performed during a short or long rest, and the previous vessel is destroyed if it still exists. The vessel vanishes in a flare of elemental power when you die.

Elemental Gift

6th-level Genie feature

You begin to take on characteristics of your patron's kind. You now have resistance to a damage type determined by your patron's kind: bludgeoning (dao), thunder (djinni), fire (efreeti), or cold (marid).

In addition, as a bonus action, you can give yourself a flying speed of 30 feet that lasts for 10 minutes, during which you can hover. You can use this bonus action a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Sanctuary Vessel

10th-level Genie feature

When you enter your Genie's Vessel via the Bottled Respite feature, you can now choose up to five willing creatures that you can see within 30 feet of you, and the chosen creatures are drawn into the vessel with you.

As a bonus action, you can eject any number of creatures from the vessel, and everyone is ejected if you leave or the vessel is destroyed.

In addition, anyone (including you) who remains within the vessel for at least 10 minutes gains the benefit of finishing a short rest, and anyone can add your proficiency bonus to the number of hit points they regain if they spend any Hit Dice as part of a short rest there.

Limited Wish

14th-level Genie feature

You entreat your patron to grant you a small wish. As an action, you can speak your desire to your Genie's Vessel, requesting the effect of one spell that is 6th level or lower and has a casting time of 1 action. The spell can be from any class's spell list, and you don't need to meet the requirements in that spell, including costly components; the spell simply takes effect as part of this action.

Once you use this feature, you can't use it again until you finish 1d4 long rests.

Wizard

At 2nd level, a wizard gains the Arcane Tradition feature. Here is a playtest option for that feature: Order of Scribes.

Order of Scribes

Magic of the book—that's what many spellcasters call wizardry. The name is apt, given how much time wizards spend poring over their spellbooks, penning theories about the nature of magic, and exploring the farthest recesses of libraries. It's rare to see a wizard traveling without books and scrolls sprouting from their bags, and a wizard would go to great lengths to plumb an archive of ancient knowledge.

Among wizards, the Order of Scribes is the most bookish. It takes many forms in different worlds, but its primary mission is the same everywhere: recording magical discoveries in tomes and scrolls so that wizardry can flourish. And while every wizard values their spellbook, a scribe in the Order of Scribes dedicates themselves to magically awakening their book, turning it into a trusted companion. All wizards study their spellbooks, but a wizardly scribe talks to theirs!

Wizardly Quill

2nd-level Order of Scribes feature

As a bonus action, you can magically create a Tiny quill in your free hand. The magic quill has the following properties:

- The quill doesn't require ink. When you write with it, it produces ink in a color of your choice on the writing surface.

- The gold and time you must spend to copy a spell into your spellbook are halved if you use the quill for the transcription.
- You can erase anything you write with the quill if you wave the feather over the text as a bonus action, provided the text is within 5 feet of you.

This quill disappears if you create another one or if you die.

Awakened Spellbook

2nd-level Order of Scribes feature

Using specially prepared inks and ancient incantations passed down by your wizardly order, you have awakened an arcane sentience within your spellbook.

While you are holding the book, it grants you the following benefits:

- You can use the book as a spellcasting focus for your wizard spells.
- When you cast a wizard spell with a spell slot, you can temporarily replace its damage type with the damage type of another spell in your spellbook, as your spellbook magically alters the spell's formula for this casting.
- When you cast a wizard spell as a ritual, you can use the spell's normal casting time, rather than adding 10 minutes to it. Once you use this benefit, you can't do so again until you finish a long rest.

If necessary, you can replace the book over the course of a short rest by using your Wizardly Quill to write arcane sigils in a blank book or a magic spellbook to which you're attuned. At the end of the rest, your spellbook's consciousness is summoned into the new book, which the consciousness transforms into your spellbook, along with all its spells. If the previous book still existed somewhere, all the spells vanish from its pages.

Master Scrivener

6th-level Order of Scribes feature

Whenever you finish a long rest, you can create one magic scroll by touching your Wizardly Quill to a blank piece of paper or parchment and causing one spell from your Awakened Spellbook to be copied onto the scroll. The spellbook must be within 5 feet of you when you make the scroll.

The chosen spell must be of 1st or 2nd level and must have a casting time of 1 action. Once in the scroll, the spell's power is enhanced, counting as one level higher than normal. You can cast the spell from the scroll by reading it as an action. The scroll is unintelligible to anyone else, and the spell vanishes from the scroll when you cast it or when you finish your next long rest.

You are also adept at crafting *spell scrolls*, which are described in chapter 7 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide*. The gold and time you must spend to make such a scroll are halved if you use your Wizardly Quill.

Manifest Mind

10th-level Order of Scribes feature

You are now able to conjure forth the mind of your Awakened Spellbook. As a bonus action while the book is on your person, you can cause the mind to manifest as a Tiny spectral construct, hovering in an unoccupied space of your choice within 60 feet of you. This presence is intangible and doesn't occupy its space, and it sheds dim light in a 10-foot radius. It looks like a ghostly tome, a cascade of text, or a scholar from the past (your choice). The spectral mind has a number of hit points equal to your wizard level plus your Intelligence modifier, and it uses your Armor Class and saving throw modifiers.

While manifested, the spectral mind can hear and see, and it has darkvision with a range of 60 feet. As an action, you can hear and see using the its senses, instead of your own, until your concentration ends (as if concentrating on a spell).

Whenever you cast a wizard spell on your turn, you can cast it as if you were in the spectral mind's space, instead of your own, using its senses. You can do so a number of times per day equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

As a bonus action, you can cause the spectral mind to hover up to 30 feet to an unoccupied space that you or it can see. It can pass through creatures but not objects. The spectral mind stops manifesting if it is ever more than 300 feet away from you, if it drops to 0 hit points, if you die, or if you dismiss it as a bonus action.

One with the Word

14th-level Order of Scribes feature

Your connection to your Awakened Spellbook has become so profound that your soul has become entwined with it. While you are holding the book and its spectral mind is manifest, you can take an action to cause the two of you to teleport, swapping places. You can teleport in this way a number of times equal to your proficiency bonus, and you regain all expended uses when you finish a long rest.

Moreover, if you die but at least one spell remains in your Awakened Spellbook, you can return to life 1 minute later within 5 feet of the book. You revive with 1 hit point. Then roll 3d6. The book loses spells of your choice that have a combined spell level equal to that roll or higher. For example, if the roll's total is 9, spells vanish from the book that have a combined level of at least 9, which could mean one 9th-level spell, three 3rd-level spells, or some other combination.

Thereafter, you are incapable of casting the lost spells, even if you find them on a scroll or in another spellbook. The only way to restore your ability to cast one of the lost spells is through the *wish* spell, which can restore one spell to the book per casting.

Whither the Archivist?

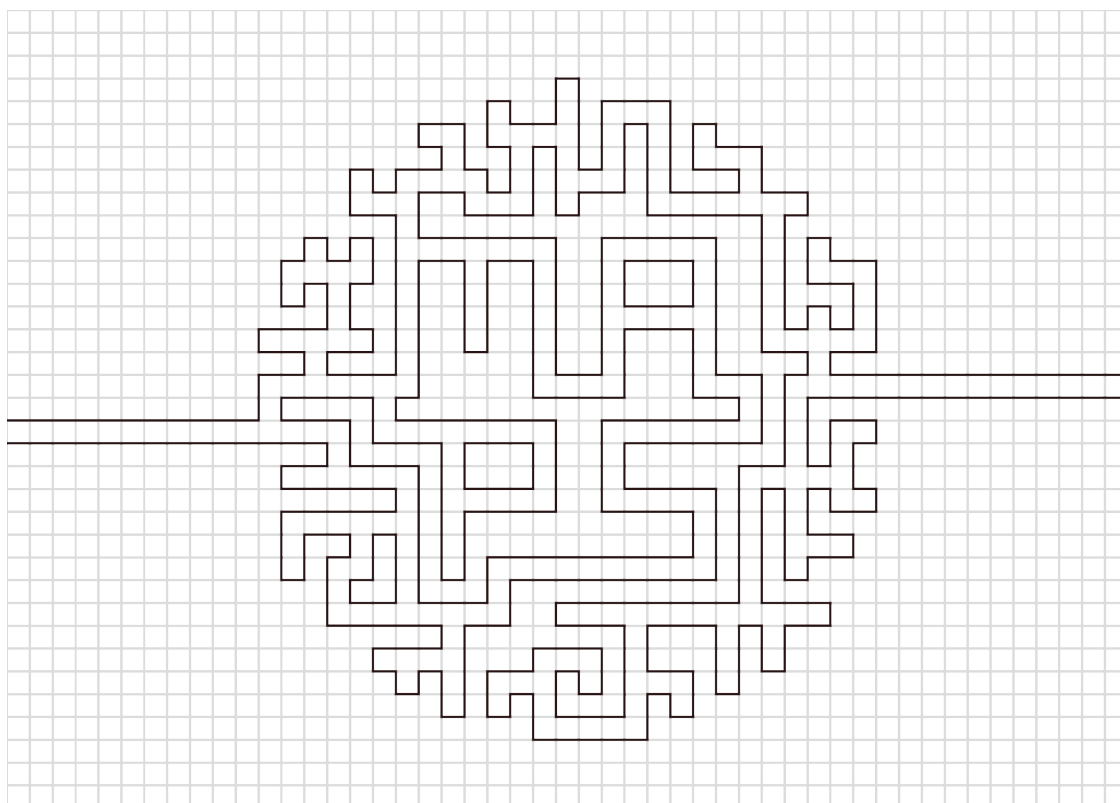
The Order of Scribes reimagines the Archivist subclass, which originally appeared in *Unearthed Arcana* as a subclass for the artificer. That subclass was well liked, but there was a fair amount of confusion about its story. And many readers thought it might work better as a wizard subclass. Thematically, the subclass is a perfect fit for the wizard, who has always been associated with scrolls and the written word in D&D, so we've taken the bones of the Archivist and given it new life as the Order of Scribes.

Regarding other wizard subclasses, we can share that neither of the wizard subclasses we've presented in *Unearthed Arcana* recently—*Onomancy* and *Psionics*—will be moving forward in our development process, since they didn't appeal to enough people and we can explore those subclasses' themes in other ways.

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Maps of the Month: Mythic Odysseys of Theros, Acquisitions Incorporated, The Green Dragon Inn

Coinciding with D&D Live 2020: Roll w/
Initiative, we explore more in-game entertaining
spaces—including an amphitheater fit for the
gods, and a gambling den run by the undead!



*WARNING: THESE MAPS MAY CONTAIN SPOILERS FOR
MYTHIC ODYSSEYS OF THEROS, ACQUISITIONS
INCORPORATED, AND EXPEDITION TO THE RUINS OF
GREYHAWK.*

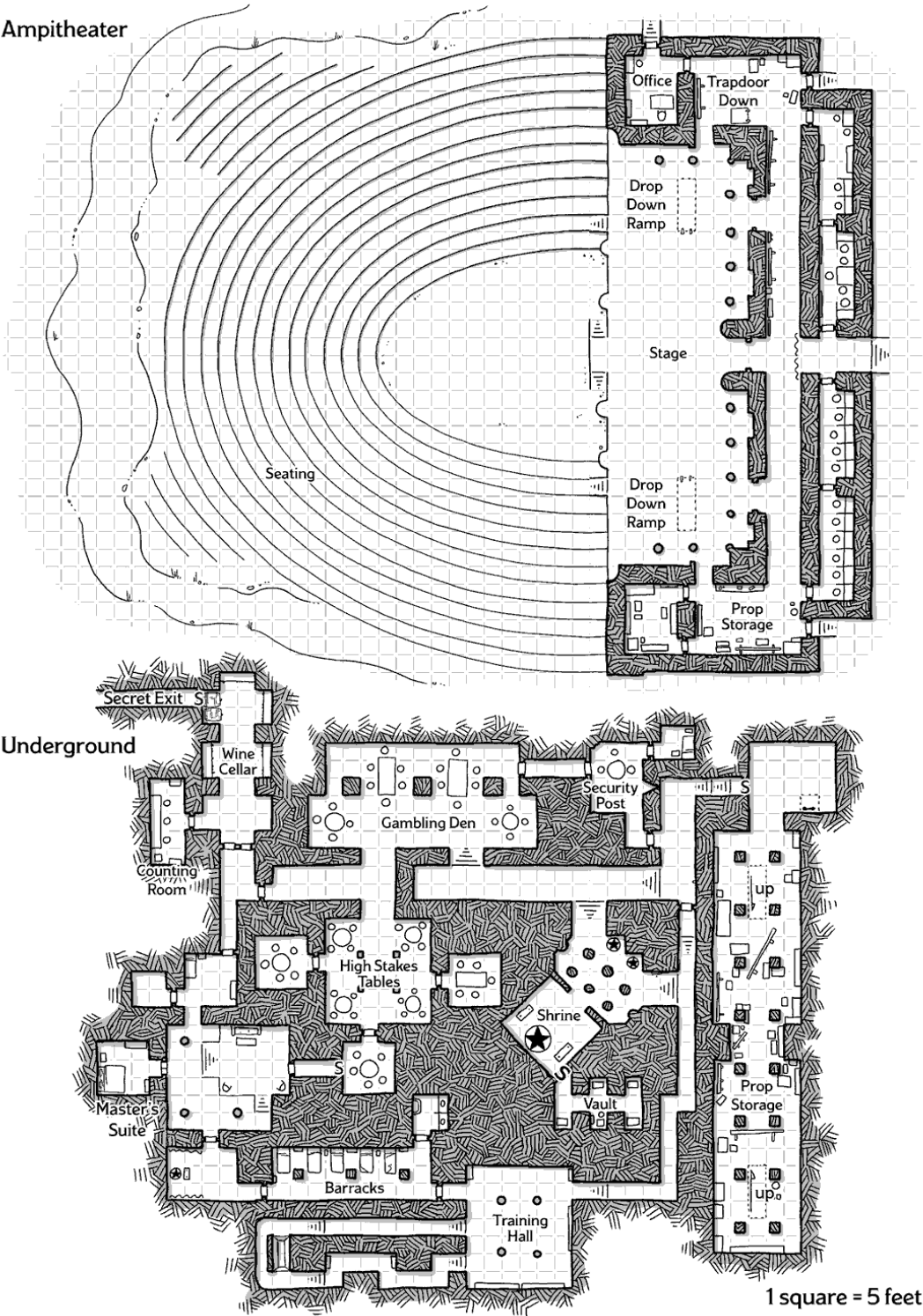
MYTHIC ODYSSEYS OF THEROS

The roots of Theros—the newest setting to explore in your Dungeons & Dragons campaign—lie in the myths of ancient Greece. Those classic tales are dominated by gods, heroes, and monsters, and *Mythic Odysseys of Theros* helps serve as an example of how to take inspiration from real-world mythology and adapt it into a landscape built from the ground up for fantasy adventures.

The map of Theros showcased here features an amphitheater, where music, dance, poetry, drama, comedy, and satire are all performed and celebrated. It's a fitting tribute to the games and announcements that took place during *D&D Live 2020* (albeit more safely celebrated through online spaces).

The amphitheater is set in a natural depression that provides seating for the audience. The backstage area contains dressing rooms for the performers, a prop workshop, and a storage area filled with extra set pieces. Below, secret halls include space for the activities one might expect from a typical den of iniquity, while also disguising a shrine, the barracks and training hall of a thieves' guild devoted to Phenax, and an escape tunnel for making a quick getaway.

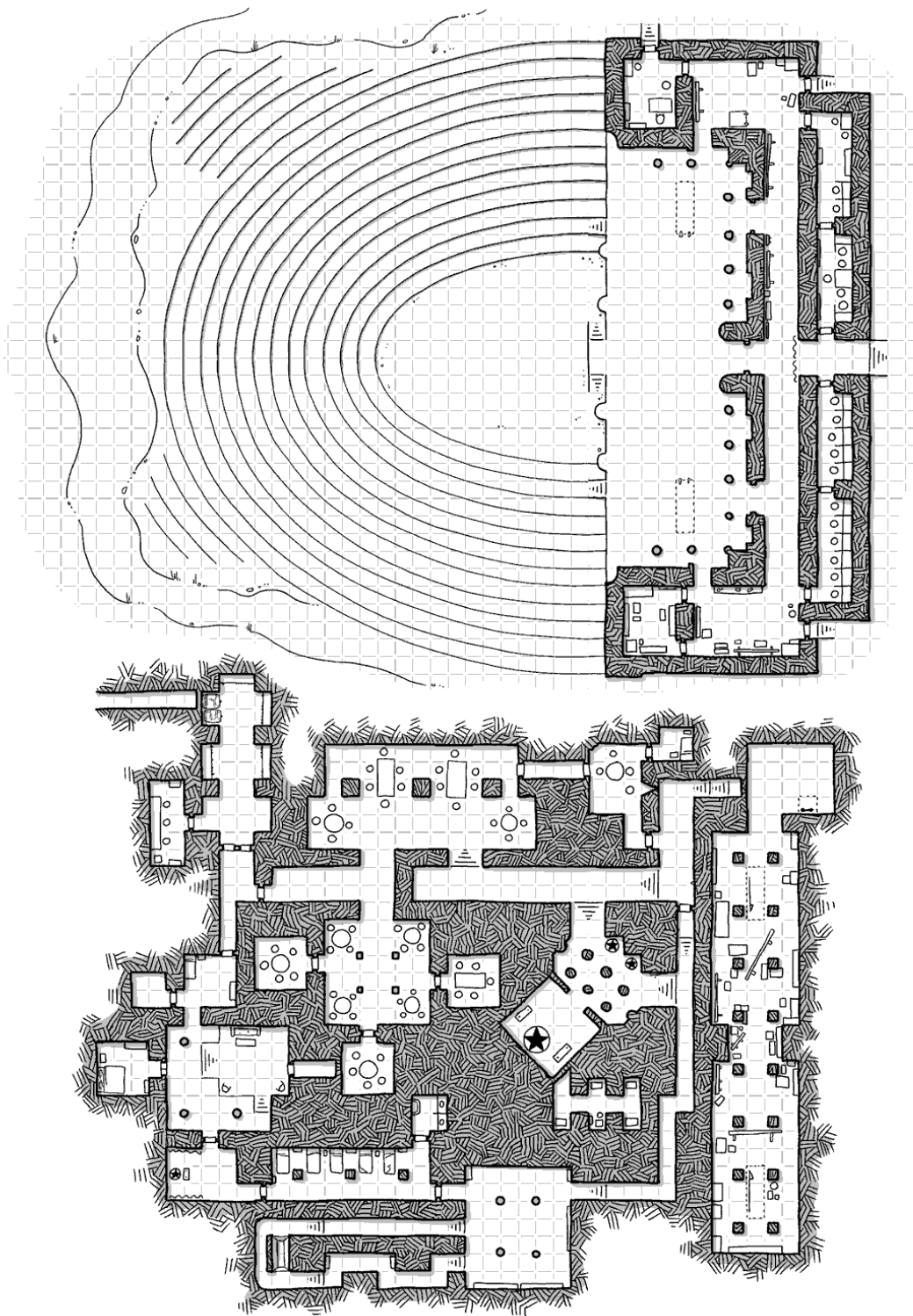
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Hardback copies of *Mythic Odysseys of Theros* release on July 21, 2002 and are available to **preorder now** with an MSRP of \$49.95. The first 20 players pre-ordering a physical copy from a participating friendly local gaming store's website will also receive a 50% discount on the digital version at D&D Beyond. Previous *Magic: The*

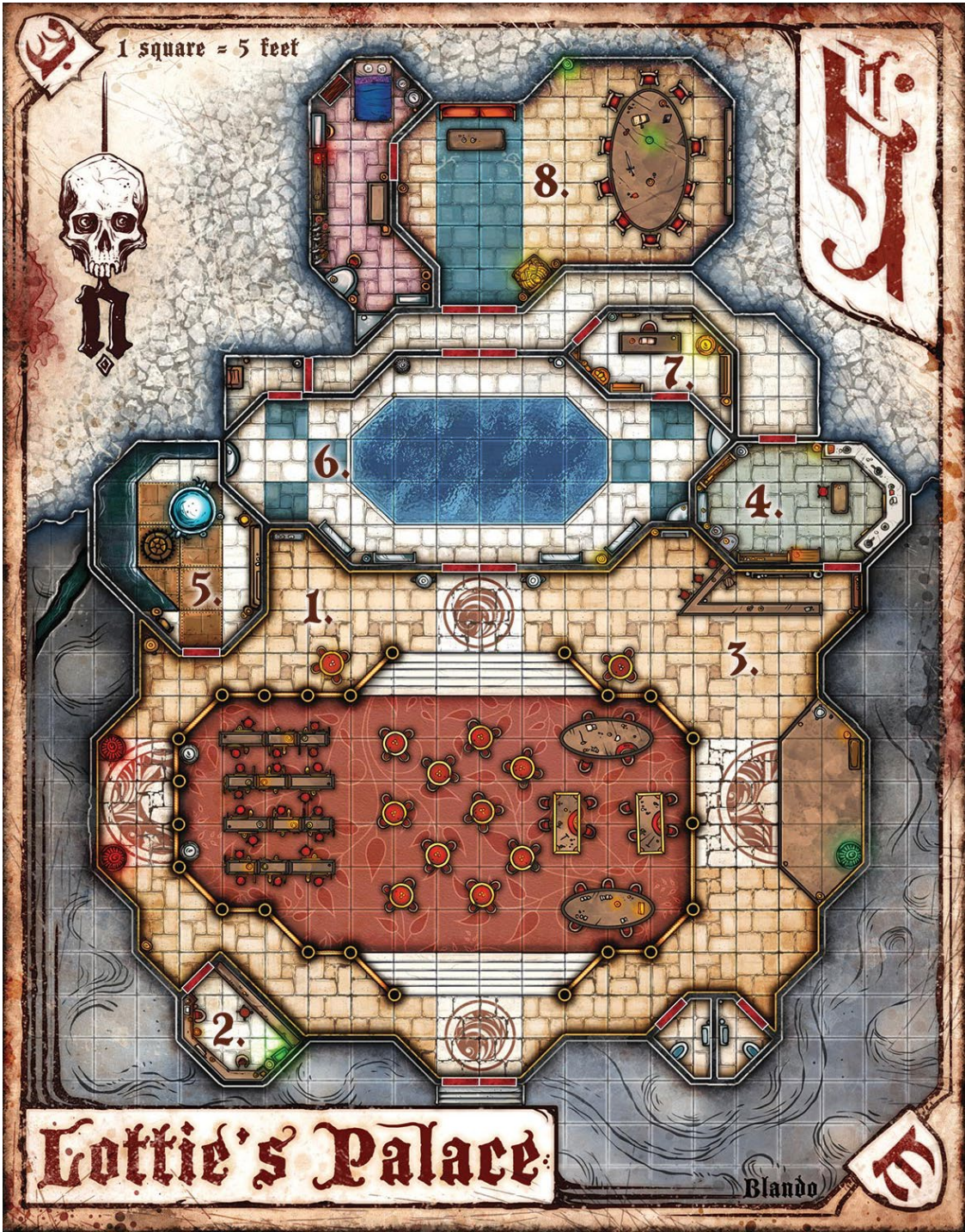
Gathering fifth edition D&D sourcebook *Guildmasters' Guide to Ravnica* is currently on sale.

ACQUISITIONS INCORPORATED

In keeping with our theme of entertaining spaces, we turn to 2019's June release and the adventures found within *Acquisitions Incorporated*.

First up, we have the swanky casino of one Lottie the lich (a master of clockwork magic). As a working gambling den, public spaces within Lottie's Palace are safe. Dangerous creatures guard the restricted areas, including the machinery room and access to Lottie's meeting hall and private chamber—so bear that in mind before you attempt to bypass any velvet ropes.

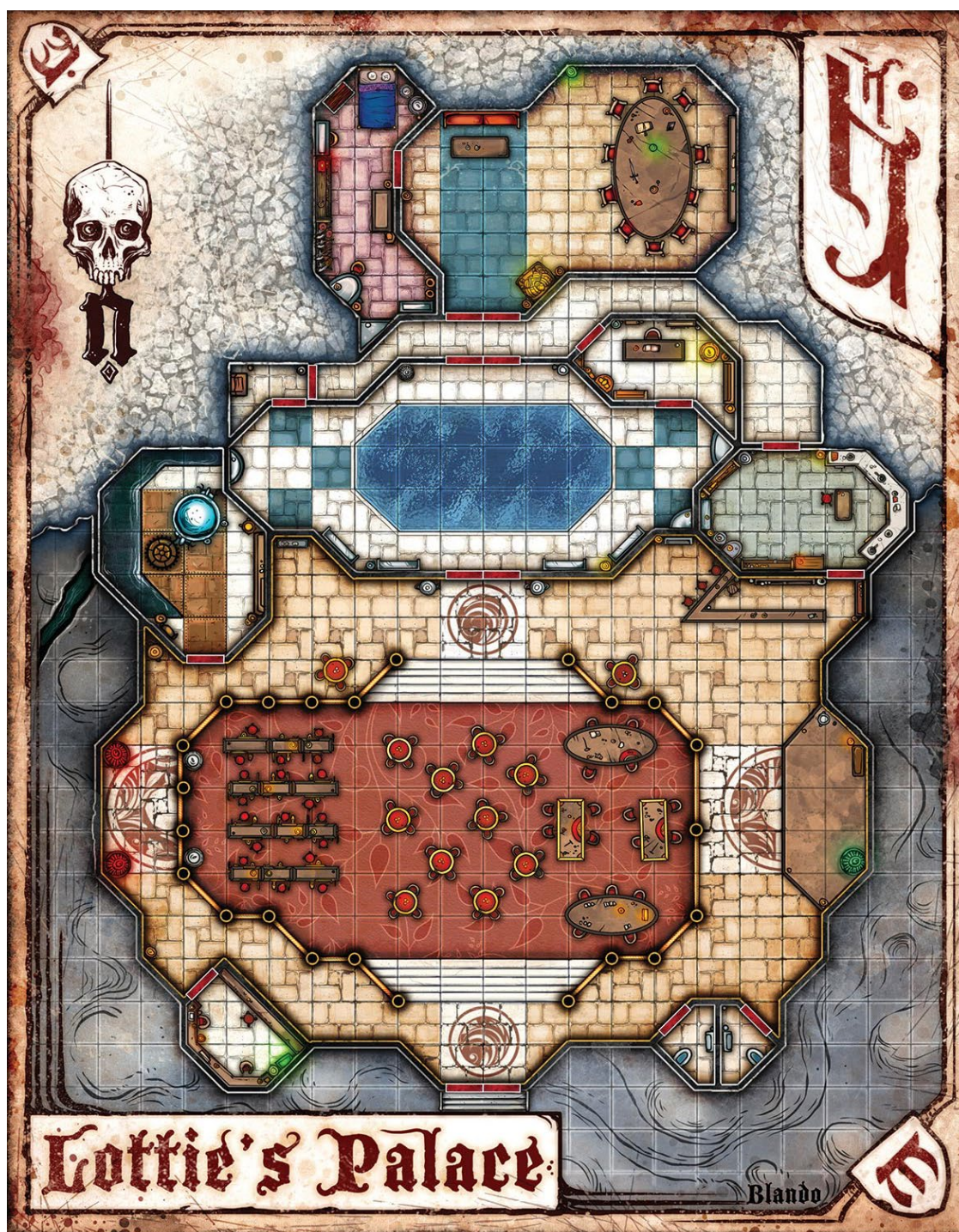
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Following our [exploration of fortified castles](#) in *Dragon+* #31, we turn to a legendary dwarven stronghold run by Clan Horn. The estates and holdings of these wealthy shield dwarves spread across the Spine of the World mountains. The Horn Enclave's business is the leasing of secure vaults to wealthy patrons, with nigh-impregnable defenses designed to keep each vault's contents safe from thieves.

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Acquisitions Incorporated is available now with an MSRP of \$49.95. Order it at your [local game store](#), [Penny Arcade](#), [D&D Beyond](#), [Roll20](#), [Fantasy Grounds](#), [Steam](#), or online at retailers such as [Amazon](#).

THE GREEN DRAGON INN

In this issue's *Dragon Classics* we look back at the City of Greyhawk and its Green Dragon Inn. As an added bonus we're including maps of the inn. Come enjoy an amber ale!

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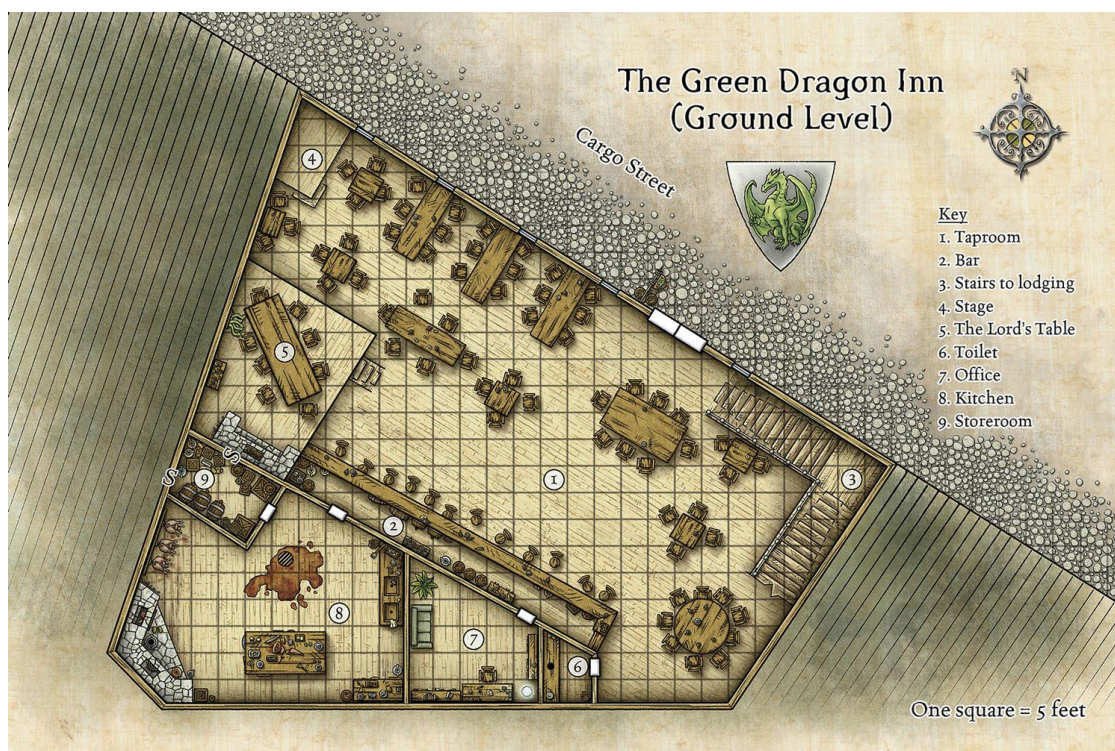


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On the map of the surrounding neighborhood in the River Quarter, you'll find the Green Dragon Inn at location #1—right next door to the Lore of the Lake taxidermy shop specializing in creatures of the deep (#6), and across the street from Hauld's apothecary shop (#3).

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Expedition to the Ruins of Greyhawk is available at the DMs Guild for \$14.99 (PDF). The good people of Greyhawk need you. What are you waiting for?

Cartographers

As always, our appreciation goes out to our amazing cartographers; this issue, these include Blando, Jonas De Ro, Dyson Logos, and Mike Schley.

BACK TO TOP



D&D Classics

We start our adventure drinking at an inn (as is so often the case), before proceeding to the ruins of a tower spanning the earliest editions of the game!

by Bart Carroll

COLOR ME ADVENTUROUS

As part of our *Stay at Home, Play at Home* material (available **for free online**), we've been including pages from the 1979 AD&D Coloring Album. I had a copy of this myself as a kid, easily my favorite coloring book of all time growing up.

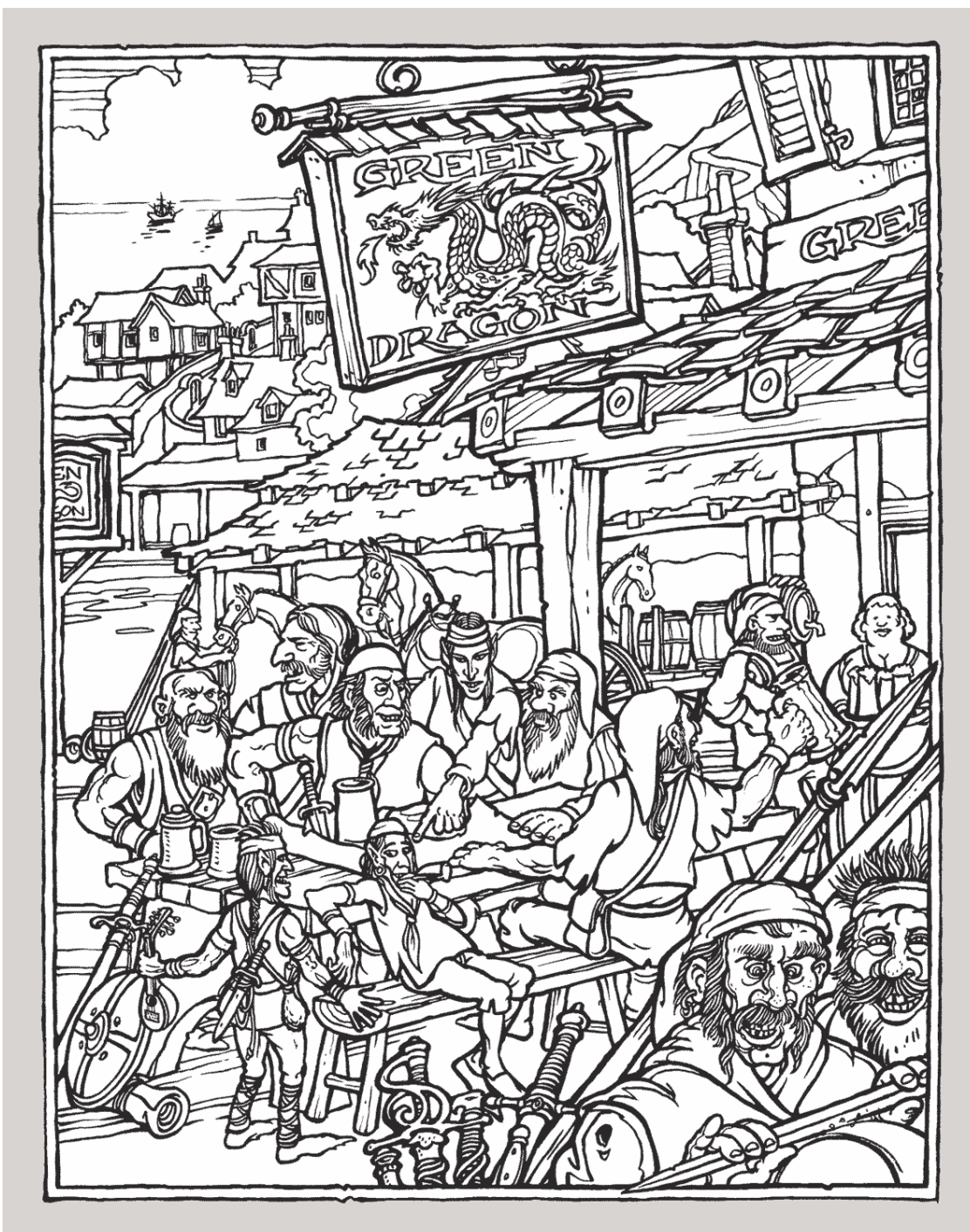
The artwork came from Greg Irons (who also worked on *Yellow Submarine*), featuring brilliantly detailed creatures pulled straight from the first edition *Monster Manual*. I took great pleasure bringing these creatures to vivid 64-color life... which also meant I could now stop coloring in the B&W illustrations of my *Monster Manual*.

The pages also told a sequential story, with accompanying text written in a maturity of language which felt beyond that of a *mere*

coloring book. For example, the story opens with a party of adventures seated at a tavern, “quaffing amber ale and charting their course to wealth beyond belief.” Since “quaff” was not on my fifth-grade vocabulary list, and there were no amber crayons in the box, I had to muddle through some of these details on my own.

The bottom of each page also featured rules for a mini-game, with a dungeon map included in the middle of the coloring album.

Admittedly, I never attempted to play the mini-game, but the map always intrigued me—and this issue we look back at how its dungeon connects with the earliest *Starter Sets* of Dungeons & Dragons and how it can still be played today!



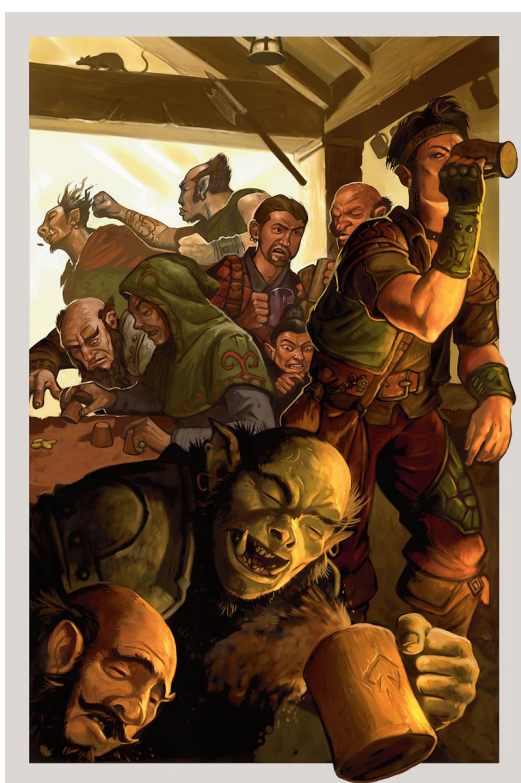
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THE GREEN DRAGON INN

The first illustration in the *AD&D Coloring Album* showcases a party of adventurers at the Green Dragon, described as a “busy inn in a town on the shores of the Lake of Unknown Depths.” As a party, they’re depicted like a sports team not yet dressed for the big game—they’re still in street clothes and haven’t donned their armor, studying a treasure map as if going through their playbook one final time. As for their lineup, we’re told they’re composed of a pair of halfling

thieves, a pair of dwarven fighters, a human cleric, human ranger, elven fighter/thief, and two lesser warriors (rookies, perhaps), planning an expedition to a ruined castle keep—Castle Greyhawk itself, quite possibly.

The inn they’re meeting at also has an entrenched history. *Expedition to the Ruins of Greyhawk* (which we peeked at in [our previous issue](#)) detailed the Green Dragon, located in the river quarter along a street crowded with rivermen, cut-throats, and thieves. Adventurers such as these are said to favor the inn as a font of information that includes strange happenings in the city, unexplored tombs, and rumors about lost levels of Castle Greyhawk:



“At night the two-story stone building comes alive with activity, the sound of boisterous laughs and the sight of flickering windows attracting custom from all quarters of the city. Most of the shabby clientele are locals, Dockway bully-boys or bargefolk looking for cheap drinks and good atmosphere. The Dragon provides the latter in quantity, for its proprietor does little to quell light violence and overtly encourages enthusiastic drinking and carousing. Weapons and armor are allowed (and a wise precaution). It’s a dangerous place but a friendly one, as long as no one

harms the staff.”

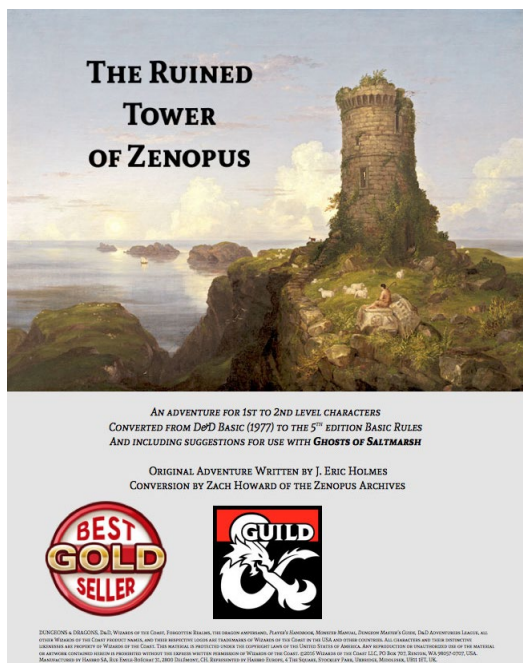
For further detail, we’ve included this excerpt from *Expedition to the Ruins of Greyhawk*:

[DOWNLOAD THE PDF](#)

Expedition to the Ruins of Greyhawk can be found at the DMs Guild in PDF form for \$14.99. The good people of Greyhawk need you. What are you waiting for?

TOWER OF ZENOPUS

If the dungeon map in the *AD&D Coloring Album* looks familiar, there's good reason. While the adventurers in the album's story are heading to the ruins of Castle Greyhawk, the album's mini-game concerns a much different location—one modified from the **sample dungeon** that appeared in the 1977 *Basic Set*.



Often referred to as the *Tower of Zenopus* (named after the sorcerer who built the place), a great deal of information can be found at the **Zenopus Archives**. We spoke with the blog's creator, Zach Howard, about this dungeon, its origins, and his own fifth edition conversion: *The Ruined Tower of Zenopus*.

How did you first get started with D&D as a hobby?

Zach Howard: It was the early '80s and I was a kid who was already into myths, wizards, and

dragons, so Dungeons & Dragons immediately grabbed me when I saw it in ads and stores. After asking for a while, I finally got the original *Basic Set* (now usually called **Holmes Basic** after its editor, J. Eric Holmes) as a birthday present in 1982. Somehow my parents ended up with that set even though it was after the release of the next version.

My copy of *Holmes Basic* was the edition with the infamous chits in place of dice (due to a shortage), and the classic module **B2: Keep on the Borderlands** by Gary Gygax. I loved the spells, monsters, and magic items, but found the rules for actually playing inscrutable until I met new neighbors who also had the same set. Then over the course of a year, I accumulated all of the AD&D hardcovers and played throughout the '80s, although the system I ran was really AD&D-lite influenced by my early experiences with *Basic*.

What led to the creation of the *Zenopus Archives*?

By the '90s I had stopped playing D&D regularly, but *Holmes Basic* kept drawing me back. After I got online in the mid-'90s I ordered a new copy of Holmes' rulebook because my original was missing part of the sample dungeon, which is known colloquially as the *Tower of Zenopus*. A few years later I learned that Holmes had written D&D-derived fiction, including several short stories for *Dragon* magazine and a novel, *The Maze of Peril* (1986), all featuring the duo of Boinger the halfling and Zereth the elf. I noticed that *The Tower of Zenopus* and *The Maze of Peril* shared common elements, leading to a review of the novel and a bibliography of Holmes' works, which were my first writings related to *Holmes Basic*. I grew interested in how Holmes, a professor of neurology and an outsider to TSR, came to be involved in editing the *Basic Rules*.

I returned fully to the hobby about ten years ago by joining a local old-school D&D group that I am still a part of. With this came an interest in examining the earliest rules for playing D&D, particularly *Holmes Basic* and its parent, the original Dungeons & Dragons rules from 1974. I enjoy sharing everything that I learn, which spurred me to start the *Zenopus Archives* blog in 2011.

What's it been like running the original *Tower of Zenopus* yourself? I love running *The Tower of Zenopus*! Several years ago I used it to start an ongoing campaign for my kids and their cousins, and just a few months ago had a great time running it as a one-off for a wargaming group I belong to, the Second Saturday Scrum Club. At this point I could DM the adventure from memory, but it always unfolds differently thanks to its circular design.

I've also written a sequel version set forty years later, with Boinger, Zereth and company as pre-generated characters, which I've run at conventions such as **Gary Con** and Scrum Con. J. Eric Holmes' son Chris even played the first time I ran it, at the North Texas RPG Con, which was amazing because Boinger and Zereth were originally his characters!

What was your process for converting the original module to create your fifth edition version *The Ruined Tower of Zenopus*? Were there elements you knew you wanted to keep, modify, or jettison?

I wanted to keep it as true to Holmes' design as possible so I kept all

of the encounters from the original, either using equivalent monsters from the current edition or creating new ones. Also, in the spirit of the original, I challenged myself to stick with content available in the current D&D *Basic Rules* as much as possible.

Treasure was converted by reducing the value, as the original relied on gold for XP, which necessitated a lot of valuable treasures. I also reduced the magic items as the original gave out more items at low levels. I added optional expansions or twists for a number of rooms, some of which were hinted at by Holmes. A friend from my local RPG group, Scott McKinley, served as editor and helped greatly by carefully checking my current edition rule conversions.

Ghosts of Saltmarsh features adventures set in and around the town of Saltmarsh—effectively a synonymous locale for *Tower of Zenopus*’s Porttown. *Ghosts of Saltmarsh* even references Zenopus’s tower as a nearby point of interest. How did you look to integrate *The Ruined Tower of Zenopus* and *Ghosts of Saltmarsh*?

Ghosts of Saltmarsh teases the Tower of Zenopus as an adventure site, describing its background but not the dungeon itself, so I included notes for using the converted original as this site. In developing these notes I relied on the excellent write-up of the town of Saltmarsh, which details several factions vying for control.

Ghosts ties the Tower of Zenopus to one of the NPCs in town, so naturally I kept that connection. I then figured out how to tie the NPCs from the original dungeon back to the factions, and how exploration of the dungeon by the adventurers might impact or bring about the possible events provided for each faction.

The Ruined Tower of Zenopus lists related readings. Can you recommend any other media that further inspired your gaming or might help set the stage for those playing through the adventure? The list for further reading in the adventure draws on the “weird fiction” that Holmes was a lifelong fan of, including authors like H.P. Lovecraft, Robert E. Howard, and Clark Ashton Smith. Beyond that I would of course recommend Holmes’ own fantasy fiction about Boinger and Zereth, which in 2017 was collected and republished as *Tales of Peril* by Black Blade Publishing. I contributed a bibliography and an article about Holmes’ writings to *Tales of Peril*. These stories draw on his earliest D&D games with his sons and are a

great way to get a feel for his style of adventure. For films, I'd recommend any with special effects by Ray Harryhausen, in particular *Mysterious Island* (1961), which features several giant animals similar to those lurking in the Zenopus dungeon.

Our thanks to Zach Howard for his time talking through the adventure! As noted, *Ghosts of Saltmarsh* references the Tower of Zenopus; as an added bonus, we've included this excerpt from the book:

[DOWNLOAD THE PDF](#)

The following background on the dungeon has been purposed from the *Basic Set*:

One hundred years ago, the sorcerer Zenopus built a tower on the low hills overlooking Portown. The tower was close to the sea cliff west of the town and, appropriately, next door to the graveyard. Rumor has it that the magician created extensive cellars and tunnels beneath the tower. The town is located on the ruins of a much older city of doubtful history and it was rumored Zenopus would excavate his cellars in search of ancient treasures.

Fifty years ago, on a cold wintry night, the wizard's tower was suddenly engulfed in green flame. Several of his servants escaped, saying their master had been destroyed by some powerful force he had unleashed in the depths of the tower. After years of reported hauntings, the authorities finally rolled a catapult through the streets of the town and the tower was battered to rubble. This stopped the hauntings, but the townsfolk continue to shun the ruins.

The entrance to the old dungeon can be easily located as a flight of broad stone steps leading down into darkness, but the few adventurous souls who have descended into the crypts below have either reported only empty stone corridors or have failed to return at all. Whispered tales are told of fabulous treasure and unspeakable monsters in the underground passages below the hilltop, and the storytellers are always careful to point out that the reputed dungeons lie in close proximity to the foundations of the older, prehuman city, to the graveyard, and to the sea.

Portown is a small but busy city linking the caravan routes from the south to the merchant ships that dare the pirate-infested waters of the Northern Sea. Humans and non-humans from all over the globe meet here. And here, at the Green Dragon inn, adventurers gather for an assault on the fabulous passages beneath the ruined tower...

The Ruined Tower of Zenopus can be found at the DMs Guild in PDF form for \$1.99. A scenario for 1st to 2nd level characters, it also includes notes on how to use it as an adventure site in *Ghosts of Saltmarsh*. *Ghosts of Saltmarsh* is available now at your **local game store**, book stores such as **Barnes & Noble**, **D&D Beyond**, **Roll20**, **Fantasy Grounds**, and **Steam**.

BACK TO TOP

to weave several subplots into the campaign that will add depth to the players' exploration of Castle Greyhawk. The Green Dragon Inn itself has a strong connection to the castle and its infamous dungeons, for it was built about thirty-five years ago by Lord Robilar himself with riches gained from looting Zagig's ruined home.

The next section of this chapter gives a detailed overview of the Green Dragon Inn (you can apply many of these details to another inn, should the PCs refuse to take Ricard up on his offer), since the PCs will be spending a great deal of time there in the opening weeks of their stay in the Free City. Considerable attention is also given to the River Quarter, the sordid city district in which the Green Dragon is situated, with additional information on several nearby locales bound to interest your players. A general overview of the city follows, providing the barest details on other districts of the city to give you a framework for further development. Several out-of-print *Dungeons & Dragons* supplements provide additional detail about the Free City if you prefer to research an "official" version of the Gem of the Flanaess, but don't be afraid to make up the missing details, allowing your players free rein to explore the parts of Greyhawk that interest them the most.

THE GREEN DRAGON INN

The Green Dragon Inn is located in Greyhawk's River Quarter, along a wide street crowded with rivermen, cutthroats, and thieves. At night the two-story stone building comes alive with activity, the sound of boisterous laughs and the sight of flickering windows attracting custom from all quarters of the city. Most of the shabby clientele are locals, Dockway bully-boys or bargefolk looking for cheap drinks and good atmosphere. The Dragon provides the latter in quantity, for its proprietor does little to quell light violence and overtly encourages enthusiastic drinking and carousing. Weapons and armor are allowed (and a wise precaution). It's a dangerous place but a friendly one, as long as no one harms the staff.

The Green Dragon's inviting taproom swells to capacity of nearly sixty patrons on weekend evenings and remains busy into the small hours of the morning. Against the back wall, to the right of the expansive and well-stocked bar, is a raised platform supporting a private dining area with a fireplace and a long mahogany table capable of seating eight. When he is not mingling with his patrons, Damaris holds court from the dais, surrounding himself with a coterie of intriguing folk. Since he considers the PCs his saviors, he frequently invites them to join him at the "Lord's Table."

For more than thirty years, adventurers have favored the Green Dragon Inn as a font of information about strange happenings in the city, unexplored tombs in the Cairn Hills, and even rumors about "lost levels" of Castle Greyhawk. The more adventurers who frequent the tavern, the deeper the information network grows, and the gregarious Ricard Damaris—seldom far from the taproom—is there to hear it all. Ricard closely follows events these days out of curiosity, but in an earlier time, information was the sole purpose of the inn. Robilar was a regular in the tavern until his betrayal of the Circle of Eight in 582 CY, but even then he didn't want anyone to know he was the owner. No overt signs of Robilar's involvement in the establishment remain, but a clever PC can figure it out easily enough.

The kitchen's specialty is "Quij's Plate," a heaping bowl of undercooked sausages and soggy potatoes large enough to please an ogre. A successful DC 18 Knowledge (history) or bardic knowledge check confirms that Quij was the name of an orc henchman of Lord Robilar. He has not been seen in years. If asked about it, Ricard smiles wistfully and recalls that the orc was a regular patron years ago but disappeared after Lord Robilar was run out of town back in 570 CY. He never admits Robilar's financial stake in the Inn, instead claiming that he owns the place himself and always has (a story that checks out according to the city's office of records).

The inn's second floor boasts several rooms for rent, each accommodating up to two characters. Only three rooms are available when the PCs first visit the inn, so members of

THE DAYS AND MONTHS OF GREYHAWK

The calendar used by most residents of the City of Greyhawk (and throughout the Flanaess) features weeks of seven days, each day dedicated to work, worship, or rest. They are:

Starday—Work
Sunday—Work
Moonday—Work
Godsday—Worship
Waterday—Work
Earthday—Work
Freeday—Rest

The annual calendar (or Dozenmonth, as it is sometimes called) is composed of twelve 28-day months interspersed with four seven-day festivals. They are:

Needfest (winter festival)
Fireseek—Winter
Readying—Spring
Coldeven—Spring
Growfest (spring festival)
Planting—Low Summer
Flocktime—Low Summer
Wealsun—Low Summer
Richfest (midsummer festival)
Reaping—High Summer
Goodmonth—High Summer
Harvester—High Summer
Brewfest (autumn festival)
Patchwall—Autumn
Ready'reat—Autumn
Sunsebb—Winter

larger groups might have to suffer the indignity of sleeping on the floor. Ricard and his staff live on the premises in a series of apartments off a hall from the guest quarters.

All prices for food, drink, and lodging conform to the standards set forth in the *Player's Handbook*.

THE GREEN DRAGON'S STAFF

Ricard supports a staff of eight, four of whom are on duty at any one time. The following notes will help you personalize the staff and add color to one of the adventure's critical locations.

Ricard Damaris ("owner," proprietor):

At the age of twenty-five, Ricard Damaris fought in one of the most pivotal battles in modern history on the fields of Emridy Meadows against the denizens of the Temple of Elemental Evil. He came away from the battle missing the fourth finger on his left hand and with an odd triangular scar on the left side of his chin. He also left with a firm understanding that the world was a fascinating place filled with hidden wonder, and set off for an adventurer's life. Years later, in the Village of Hommlet, Ricard fell into service with Lord Robilar and became one of the accomplished fighter's most trusted associates. Thirty-six years ago, when Robilar asked him to give up the adventuring life and run the Green Dragon Inn, Damaris jumped at the chance, eager for an easy retirement and fully cognizant of his luck in surviving even this long.

The tall, gruffly handsome man looks about a decade younger than his sixty-one years. He wears his thick black hair down to his shoulders, and he dresses fashionably but not ostentatiously. Ricard reveres Olidammara, the Laughing Rogue, and encourages the boisterous character of his inn, believing it to be the secret to its continuing financial success. Fistfights, broken-bottle battles, and even dagger duels don't bother him unduly, though he might step in

with a heavy club if a brawl gets out of hand. His regulars know when to stop.

If more serious weapons are drawn, dangerous magic is used, or if a member of his staff is attacked, Damaris does not hesitate to draw his own weapon (now a fine steel +2 longsword in lieu of the *blade of chaos*) and attack the offender until he flees into the street. On a few occasions Damaris has killed an unruly patron outright.

Ricard's wife, Florence, and his twenty-six-year-old

daughter have moved to land they recently inherited outside Dyvers. He still adores them and visits a few times a year.

Damaris doesn't really care about Robilar's "betrayal," since he has never trusted his master's dealings with wizards. He holds Mordenkainen in particular disdain, claiming that he and the treacherous Rary are more similar than they are different.

Ricard Damaris can be used to introduce the PCs to other characters from the neighborhood, push along a lagging adventure by feeding them an important overheard clue, or foreshadow later events with Lord Robilar in the dungeons below Castle Greyhawk. The PCs should come to know him as a trusted friend and a strong ally.

Gulthen (bartender, evening): A friendly, bald man with muscular forearms, Gulthen (N male human expert 2) serves his customers with an open ear and generous pours for good

tippers. Once he has developed a

bond with a PC, he sees it as his duty to point out attractive members of the opposite sex and "tough customers" who shouldn't be trifled with.

Dendra (bartender, day): A thin, sarcastic woman with gray hair tied back by a multicolored cord, Dendra (NG female human expert 3) doesn't care for small talk with customers. She is frazzled by the influx of pilgrims and festival-goers that keep the Green Dragon busy even during the afternoon, and she talks openly about leaving for another job that "might turn out."



An evening at the Green Dragon Inn

SALTMARSH REGION

The land near Saltmarsh is safe for travelers, as are the roads that cut through the region. Small farms and manor houses dot the area, many maintained by army veterans who were granted land by royal decree. A number of small halfling villages are scattered around the area, located just off the main roads. Such locations consist of several farmhouses clustered around a pub that provides a warm welcome to visitors who come in peace. Once one journeys off the beaten path, however, a variety of threats emerge from the swampy wilderness.

Map 1.2 shows Saltmarsh and the surrounding area, where all of the following sites and features are located.

ROADS AND PATHWAYS

The roads around Saltmarsh are heavily patrolled, part of the crown's effort to make its influence felt in the region. Travel along these thoroughfares is usually safe, with most encounters involving merchant caravans, guard patrols, and fellow travelers. Small farms and manors cluster near the roads, relying on passing guard patrols for their safety. Where these settlements grow more widely spaced, bandit raids become more likely. Travelers on the road meet 1d4 caravans per day and have a 5 percent chance of being the target of an ambush by 2d4 **bandits** led by a **bandit captain**. In addition, each day on the road a party passes 1d3 small villages or manors. There is a 25 percent chance that any such location is inhabited by halflings. Otherwise, the location is a human enclave.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Beyond Saltmarsh are a number of locations that characters can visit. Providing in-depth detail in for all of them is beyond the scope of this book, but enough information is provided to create a foundation for further development.

ABBNEY ISLE

This island south of Saltmarsh is the featured location in the adventure *Isle of the Abbey*.

The island is the site of a small abbey that was long ago abandoned by the order of monks that built it. Since then, various outlaw gangs and monsters have claimed it as a lair.

BURLE

Burle is a fortified outpost that is always on guard for monsters emerging from the Dreadwood. It serves as a key stopover point for travelers venturing inland from the southern coastal region. The community is dominated by a small keep set atop a hill that overlooks the forest it borders. A few farms cluster around it, the locals relying on the royal garrison to keep them safe from marauders.

Burle's most distinctive feature is the small copse of trees that grows in the middle of the keep. An ancient **treant** named Wander Root dwells in the keep and acts as an informal ambassador between the humans of Keoland and the wood elves and good-aligned fey of the Dreadwood. Years ago, the knights of Keoland helped the denizens of the forest defeat an incursion by cultists worshipping elemental evil fire. Since then, the elves, the treants, and the crown of Keoland have observed the Wild Flame Pact—a treaty that calls for mutual defense against the Dreadwood's horrors.

The outpost is commanded by its castellan, Kiara Shadowbreaker (LG female half-elf **knight**), who has led many successful raids into the Dreadwood. Kiara is a grim figure, always cognizant of the threat posed by the forest's denizens. She sees trouble behind every piece of news, and she keeps the warriors and rangers headquartered here ready to fight at a moment's notice. She is especially keen to hear news about the Scarlet Brotherhood. Kiara is convinced that the organization poses



a dire threat to the region but has failed to uncover concrete evidence of its meddling. She suspects that Duke Feldren of Seaton has been compromised by Scarlet Brotherhood agents, and she surreptitiously seeks to hire spies who could investigate him in search of proof.

Burle provides a safe resting place before and during expeditions into the Hool Marshes or the Dreadwood. Kiara offers a bounty equal to 5 gp per Hit Die for any aberration, elemental, or outlaw slain in the region. She keeps a bounty board just outside Burle's gates, which occasionally offers larger rewards for the capture or killing of specific monsters or criminals.

DWARVEN MINE

Dwarven prospectors have toiled in this new mine for the past three years. Soldiers from Keoland's royal army are stationed here for security alongside dwarf fighters from the Copperlocks clan. Travelers in need of shelter can rest on cots in the guard towers that surround the place, but only those with business related to the mine are allowed inside the gates without supervision.

The mine is a broad shaft dug into a steep hillside near the shore. Stone walls encompass it, with two guard towers overlooking the main gate and three other towers spaced evenly around the perimeter. The inner area contains a small village with warehouses, workshops, and houses, all erected during the time when the excavation was beginning and enormous amounts of stone became available for building.

The laborers also took the time to build a tavern, the Miner's Respite, and spend their off hours there drinking, swapping tales, and gambling. The game of darts has become an obsession among the bored miners and soldiers, and anyone with real skill at the game has a chance of talking their way past the guard at the door to engage in a match.

HAUNTED HOUSE

This abandoned house is the center of the action in *The Sinister Secret of Saltmarsh*. Use the description from that adventure for this place.

The haunted house can be a useful location for smugglers who operate in the Saltmarsh area. Gellen Primewater relies on this drop point to conduct much of his business.

LIZARDFOLK LAIR

This location is featured in *Danger at Dunwater*. Use the description from that adventure for this place.

The lizardfolk here view the area around the swamp as their domain. They threaten intruders to warn them off, attacking only those who insist on remaining in the area. The lizardfolk are not only guarding their territory, they are protecting a **young black dragon**. It has ordered them to keep its existence secret while it seeks to build an army of followers and one day emerge to conquer the surrounding area.

SAHUAGIN FORTRESS

This rocky outcropping sits atop a submerged fortress occupied by the fearsome sahuagin. This place is fully detailed in *The Final Enemy*.

This lair is an underwater stronghold maintained by the sahuagin. From here, they prey on passing ships and plot to grow in strength to the point that they can lay waste to Saltmarsh. A total of thirty **sahuagin**, a **sahuagin priestess**, and a **sahuagin baron** lair here.

SEATON

The folk of Saltmarsh point to Seaton as an example of the fate they want to avoid. For years, Seaton was about twice as large as Saltmarsh and enjoyed prosperous fishing and shipping industries. When King Kimbertos Skotti turned his attention south to deal with the Sea Princes, his admirals chose Seaton as the location for an important military port. Today, Seaton has been transformed from a robust fishing town into a drab fortress. Seaton's harbor is heavily fortified, and a large garrison of naval ships, infantry, and cavalry serves as the primary defense point for the region.

Duke Marik Feldren (CN male human **knight**) rules over the town in his capacity of governor of the southern province that includes Seaton. King Skotti actually granted Marik's older brother, the war hero Obertus Feldren, governorship of the province. But the affable duke's reign was short-lived, for he fell ill and died a year later. The title fell to Marik, a sheltered hothead eager to surpass his brother's legend. He considers the natives of the region as cowards who hid away in their isolated villages while the north suffered its losses. He further believes that his brother, who had a genuine fondness for the local fishers and traders, was laid low by traitors in service to the Sea Princes.

Duke Feldren intends to raise taxes to fund an aggressive expansion of the royal navy and launch raids against the Sea Princes' domain. The Scarlet Brotherhood, for its part, is delighted by Duke Feldren's plans to keep the pot stirred. If the opportunity arises, the Brotherhood might plant evidence of plots against him to feed the duke's suspicion of the locals and, with luck, spark civil unrest that tempts the Sea Princes into making incursions into the area.

TOWER OF ZENOPUS

The wizard Zenopus once dwelled in this tower on the cliffs outside Saltmarsh. He built his lair next to the remains of an ancient graveyard rumored to be haunted.

One night, the tower was engulfed in a fiery green aura. A few brave folks from town investigated the tower and found it abandoned. The door at the base of the cellar stairs was covered with strange symbols and wrapped in silver chains. An explorer tried to open the door, but a jolt of lightning from the door's runes nearly killed her. Shortly afterward, strange spirits and capering fey were seen atop the tower. After a few travelers went missing nearby, the town council asked a Keoish galleon to bombard the structure with catapult fire until it was battered into rubble.

Since then, the ruins have been largely forgotten. The exception is Keleddek the Unspoken, the town wizard, who used magic to open the cellar door and found that the passages led to a hidden sea cave. He uses the cave as a meeting point for smugglers. He has recruited several **goblins** to keep watch over the place, along with a trained **giant constrictor snake** he raised from a hatchling. The goblins barricaded several passages leading deeper into the dungeons after losing several of their number to **ghouls** and **giant rats** that emerged from the depths.

Keleddek is loath to tell anyone about his secret stronghold, but he can't shake the idea of following the deeper passages for the chance of unearthing Zenopus's lost secrets. If the characters earn his trust, he might take them into his confidence. The details of the deep dungeons are left to the DM's invention.

GEOGRAPHIC FEATURES

The lands around Saltmarsh are filled with peril, since much of the region is untamed wilderness. Even though the Kingdom of Keoland has grand ambitions, its focus in the south remains on the sea. The crown does its best to make sure the roads are safe, but otherwise it is generally content to leave the monsters and vicious tribes of the wilds alone as long as they remain in their habitats.

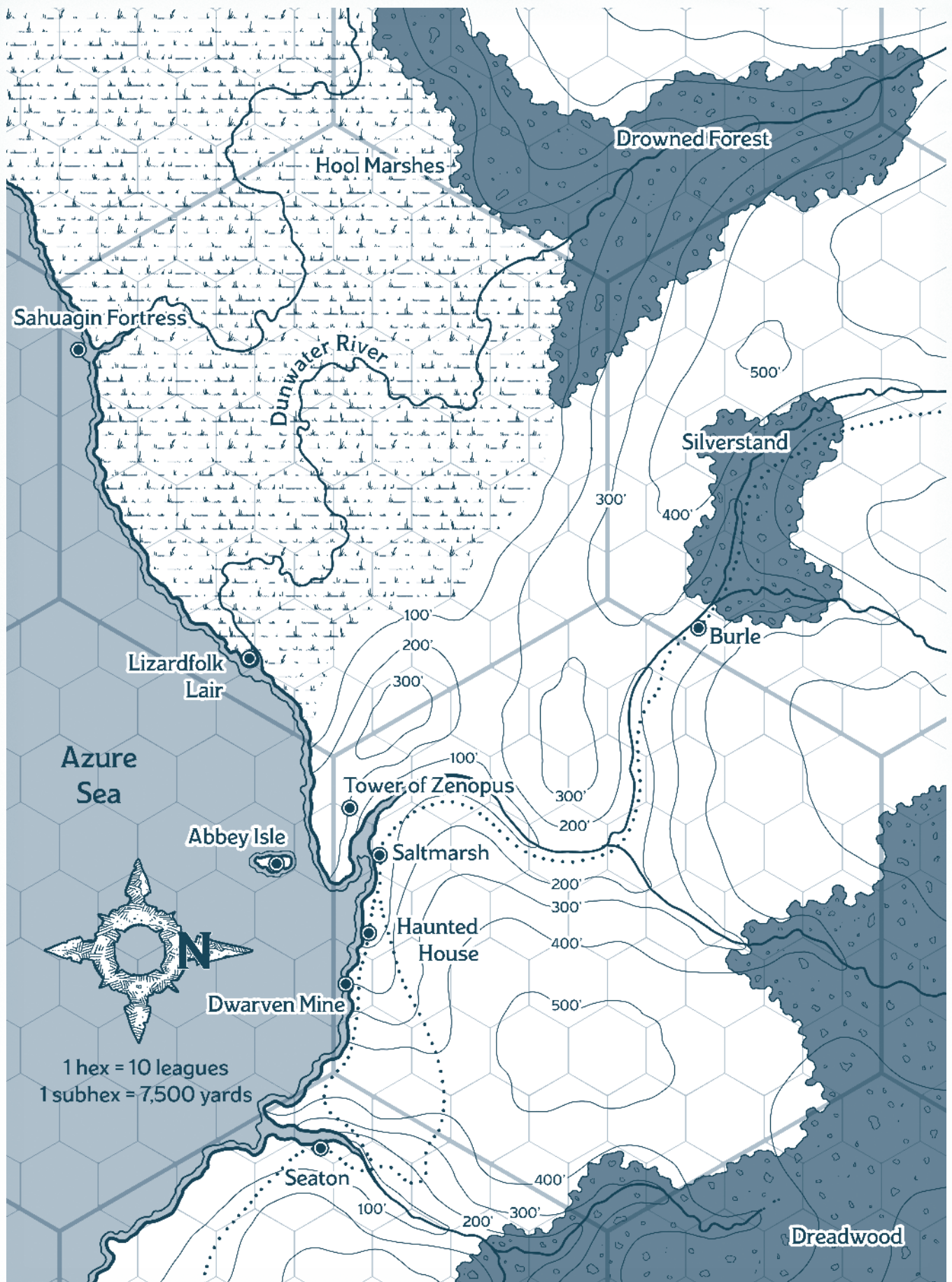
THE DREADWOOD

Long a home of horrid monsters and vicious raiders, the Dreadwood hides within its borders a multitude of terrors. Keoland maintains ranger patrols that sweep through the outer reaches of the forest periodically, while several wood elf clans dwell at its edge. The two forces are generally successful at keeping the monsters of the Dreadwood in check, but at times a threat that avoids them or overcomes them emerges to wreak havoc across the land.

The inner depths of the Dreadwood are a place where the planar bindings between Oerth and the Shadowfell are thin. Undead creatures and villainous monsters that seek to tap into the essence of the Shadowfell thrive deep in the forest. Its innermost reaches mingle with that dark realm, forming a warped mirror version of the Dreadwood that extends into that plane.

One of the Dreadwood's most powerful denizens is a truly ancient **night hag** named Granny Nightshade, who dwells in the deepest depths of the forest. She commands magic as well as a mighty wizard does and has struck bargains with several dukes of the Nine Hells. Her twisted fortress, Castle Spiral, stands at the nexus point between the Shadowfell and Oerth, and from its gates emerge **skeletons**, **zombies**, **shadows**, and other horrors to threaten the land.

Granny Nightshade counts **jackalweres** as her foremost minions, and she has also acquired the services of **goblins**, **orcs**, **hobgoblins**, **ogres**, and **trolls** over the years. **Green hags** bound to her service act as baronesses who enforce her will over their section of the forest, and an elite guard of twenty-three **oni** acts as her personal messengers and enforcers. She keeps three consorts, powerful **vampires** that struggle among themselves for her favor.



MAP 1.2: SALTMARSH AND ENVIRONS

The Best of the Dungeon Masters Guild

Party of one? We seek out the best tools and scenarios to play D&D solo.



While most of us would rather be sitting around a table (virtual or otherwise) enjoying a game of D&D with our friends, Dungeons & Dragons can be played by just one or a couple of players. This issue we look at some of the best solo options available on the DMs Guild and talk to a creator who's a master of the genre. And with the **latest D&D storyline** announced, we also check out the wilderness experiences you could enjoy (if that's the right word!?) on your way to meet the Frostmaiden. Read on to find out more!

SOLO/DUO ADVENTURING

Video conferencing has allowed many of us to get together during

these times of social distancing. Yet there are still moments when you could sneak in a few extra sessions of play if you were able to wear the DM's hat and act as a player, without any involvement from other people. Here's what the DMs Guild community has on offer to help you play even when you're the only adventurer in the room.



(Select to view)

D&D Solo Adventure: The Death Knight's Squire, by 5E Solo Gamebooks

Price: \$9.99 (PDF), \$25.99 (Softcover)

The Death Knight's Squire is a solo module designed for players eager to play fifth edition D&D whether they can find a group with a Dungeon Master or not. An "Adventure Booklet" contains named entries that form the narrative basis of the adventure, while a "Maps Booklet" includes grid-like sections that can be played through using character and monster tokens. Featuring

combat, movement, searching for traps, investigation, and healing—it's a great replacement for D&D night. Check out our interview with creator Paul Bimler below.

[MORE INFO](#)

Dark Sorceries—A 5E Solo Adventure, by Abel T. Trotter

Price: \$9.99 (PDF)

Inspired by *The Death Knight's Squire*, the first solo adventure for the *Heroes of Faerûn: Shadowborne* campaign is designed for a 2nd-level character.



(Select to view)

Abel T. Trotter's story sees players fight monsters, create allies, and come face to face with creatures birthed from dark magic. The PDF version of the adventure includes links that can be clicked to take you directly to your character's choices as you

progress through the story.

[MORE INFO](#)



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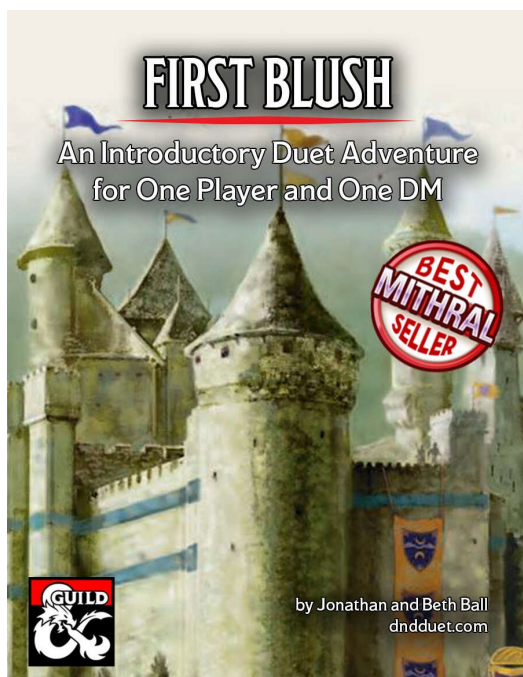
SOLO EPA 01: Eight Petals Argent, by Wraith Wright Productions

Price: \$11.99 (PDF)

An excellent piece of fiction kicks off the narrative for this daring solo play adventure. *Eight Petals Argent* uses character sheets and dice to resolve various challenges and player choices, as well as simple combat maps that a player can use with miniatures or tokens. The story sees the player heading to Waterdeep for the annual Day of Wonders celebration, where a wealthy faction of academics offers bounties for rare trinkets hidden around the City of

Splendors.

[MORE INFO](#)



(Select to view)

First Blush, by Jonathan and Beth Ball

Price: \$2.00 (PDF)

This module designed for one DM and one player is a gentle introduction for new D&D devotees. It allows a player to practice roleplaying with a couple of key NPCs and experience a simulated dungeon and combat scenario before heading off to a real dungeon to discover the secret within. The creature and NPC appendix also includes optional stats in case a PC decides to bring an ally along. Credits for *First*

Blush include “Mistress of Maps” **Deven Rue**, who created maps for Critical Role’s *Explorer’s Guide to Wildemount*.

[MORE INFO](#)

DESIGN THOUGHT: SIMPLICITY IS IMMERSIVE

Roleplaying games only seem complicated until you break them down into their core actions. At its most basic level an RPG involves a DM describing the scene to a player, followed by the player describing their actions in response to that scene. This very simple exchange repeats until the situation is resolved.

Extra rules are usually added when there could be multiple outcomes of an action, and that’s when dice rolling and character skills come into play. In a solo-play adventure it’s best to keep these as simple as

possible. Adding too many options or forcing a player to consult a lot of tables as they make their way through a fantasy landscape can break the suspension of disbelief.

There are lots of tricks a creator can use to help further immerse the player in the environment. When creating a solo-play adventure, a writer should be as descriptive as possible to help set the scene. Adding easily printable maps and tokens (not everyone already has a collection of figures) can also help evoke a real sense of place. The story needs to be as compelling to the player as if it was being described by a DM and requiring the player to focus too heavily on the mechanics may disrupt that.

For the best results, suggest in your prologue that a player sits away from distractions as they take on your quest. Appropriate music can help create the right mood, while other accessories (such as convincing a player to log their progress in a fancier notebook that suits their character) can also be used to further enhance the illusion.

CREATOR Q&A: 5E SOLO GAMEBOOKS

Dungeons & Dragons has embraced solo play since its earliest editions, allowing dungeon doors to be kicked open even when there's no-one else around to play. *Dragon+* chatted with DMs Guild creator Paul Bimler of 5E Solo Gamebooks to find out what makes a good solo module.

Have you always been a fan of *Endless Quest*-style adventures?

I'm a massive fan of Steve Jackson and Ian Livingstone's *Fighting Fantasy* game books. They were a big inspiration for me. There are plenty of other series too and there's been a bit of a renaissance recently. There are four *Destiny Quest* stories that are these huge, thick books. Joe Dever's *Lone Wolf* series has been reissued recently and a friend of mine, Richard Sampson, has been doing all the art for those. Dave Sharrock's *Malice from the Middle Vale* is a beautifully written and illustrated book. I've got the whole set of *Fabled Lands*. And there are a few more recent ones, such as *Rider of the Black Sun*. I've got just about every game of this type that you can think of. Did you know that you can play *Skyrim* solo on Alexa? You can play

through the whole thing like an old-school text adventure.

What's the draw of solo gaming?

It's not a replacement for group play, but rather a really enjoyable accompaniment to group adventures. Many people will get together with their D&D group once every week or every two weeks. Some will think, 'I need more D&D than that!' That's where this sort of system comes in. It allows people to play D&D whenever they feel like it.

Are players aware of solo gaming as an option for Dungeons & Dragons?

It's not really in the public consciousness. On social media people often ask how they would go about playing a solo adventure. And the response they often get is, 'You mean a video game?' Or people will point out that at its heart D&D is a social game. But solo adventures have actually been around forever. Gary Gygax introduced solo rules in first edition D&D when he put out a supplement to enable players to randomly generate dungeons. And when the *Red Box Basic Set* came out in 1983 the *Player's Handbook* included a solo adventure. Everyone who played through it has fond memories of that little dungeon.

When did you create your first D&D solo adventure?

I played D&D through the '80s and until the early '90s but had taken a long hiatus for various family and work reasons. I came back to it during fourth edition and was an occasional DM and player. One day I was keen to play a D&D solo adventure and thought I'd go and track one down. When I went onto the DMs Guild there weren't any for fifth edition so I thought I better write one. My first adventure is called *The Death Knight's Squire* and it's part of a series I've started that I hope will take characters all the way up to 20th level.

What has the response been like?

The response has been fantastic! I run a Facebook group called **Dungeons & Dragons Solo Adventures** and we have 3,600 members. I started it because other creators on the DMs Guild suggested I needed a way to keep in touch with the fan base. I thought a Facebook group was a good way of grouping my target audience together. There are a few other solo adventure writers on there as well, including Randall Wright who's written an awesome adventure

called *Eight Petals Argent* and another creator who publishes under the name Blaise Wigglesworth. Great name! He's got a two-part adventure called *Shipwrecked*. I think the lockdown situation has really brought solo adventures to the fore and a few more people are trying their hand at them.

How long does it take to write a solo adventure?

They take a while to write as you can imagine, with all the branching options. The most recent one took just under a year to write and then I had to playtest it. I was getting distracted by a lot of other side projects at the same time so hopefully I can write the next one a little faster.

What's the secret to a really great solo adventure?

Player agency is crucial. I think that's the secret to any good adventure. Multiplayer adventures can read as if they are railroading a party by not giving them a lot of options because it's up to the DM to provide those branching options. With a solo adventure there's no DM so you have to write in all of that detail and provide lots of ways the story could go.

It's also important to include a lot of non-combat elements. It's not just about moving from one encounter to another, you have to craft situations where a player needs to use persuasion skills or figure out the meaning of runes hidden inside a book using an Intelligence check. I like giving characters the keys to things, such as items that help them solve a particular situation when they encounter it later on down the track. If they didn't pick up that item, you need to provide other options to solve the situation.

Can your adventures be played by more than one player?

There's an art to balancing a solo adventure properly. You have to be careful not to overpower encounters and make them deadly or underpower encounters and make them boring. All the guidance you need is on page 82-83 of the *Dungeon Master's Guide* and a lot of that is honed through extensive playtesting. Quite often I've found that two players will play through my modules. In my most recent books I've included a table at the back which enables each encounter to be converted for up to four players so they can get together without a DM and run the adventure.

Are there different types of solo adventuring?

If you play one of my game books such as *The Death Knight's Squire*, while there is dice rolling involved, they have a limited amount of choices. I take care to provide several paths through the books and numerous options down each of those paths, but they are not limitless in the ways you can go, like a DM-led adventure. However, there is another type of solo adventuring which is more like playing in a sandbox campaign. This involves using tables to randomly generate every aspect of the adventure, and the player builds the adventure as they move through it. I've also written a comprehensive guide to this style of solo adventuring, entitled *The Solo Adventurer's Toolbox*, which has been released on the Dungeon Master's Guild.

Can these guides take the place of a DM?

With a little creativity, absolutely. *Mythic Game Master Emulator* is a way of roleplaying without a DM. It works like an 'Oracle' and you ask it 'Yes' or 'No' questions and resolve those with dice rolls. For example, your character is a six-foot warforged barbarian and you're entering a gnome village. You might ask the Oracle, could I potentially disguise myself as a gnome? The modifiers range from Impossible, No Way, Very Unlikely, Unlikely, Fifty/Fifty, Somewhat Likely, Likely, and Very Likely. Each of those modify the dice roll. The only way to achieve something Impossible is by rolling a crit on a d100. And if that happens, you add more detail. How did the barbarian manage to disguise himself? Perhaps the gnomes of the village have been drugged in some way. I've taken that general idea and simplified it for fifth edition in the *Solo Adventurer's Toolbox*.

Can this system also generate adventures?

The *Solo Adventurer's Toolbox* includes a plethora of tables to help you generate freeform solo adventures. Imagine that you arrive at a settlement and want to visit a blacksmith. You can roll on a table to determine what type of settlement it is and figure out if it's big enough to include a blacksmith or another particular type of merchant. My system even allows you to randomly generate terrain as you move. You can then also bring in other tools such as the section in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for randomly generating dungeons.

Can these guides turn any module into a single-player version of

that storyline?

Where the *Solo Adventurer's Toolbox* creates freeform, self-generating adventures, *The Dungeon Oracle* allows players to run any published adventure as a solo experience. A lot of people are into that because it allows them to take advantage of the excellent published adventures from Wizards of the Coast and other writers on DMs Guild.

What's up next for you?

The next thing I'm working on is called *Solo Skirmish*, which is a more combat-based, faster style of solo adventure. It's a little bit boardgamey, but without a board, as a lot of it is theater of the mind—although it does use a battle map during combat. It revolves around a system of phases: a location phase, a hero phase, an encounter phase, and a threat phase. As you move through those you roll on tables for encounters. There are plot points in *Solo Skirmish* but it's quite linear as it's designed to be a good way to run an hour-long adventure whenever you feel like it. The book will include five quests, written into a campaign. I'm hoping to have that ready before the end of June. After that, I'm writing the *Solo Adventurer's Toolbox Part Two*, which will include a bunch of extra supplemental material. I'll also be starting the next game book for 6th level characters soon after that. And I want to write more *Solo Skirmish* material as well!

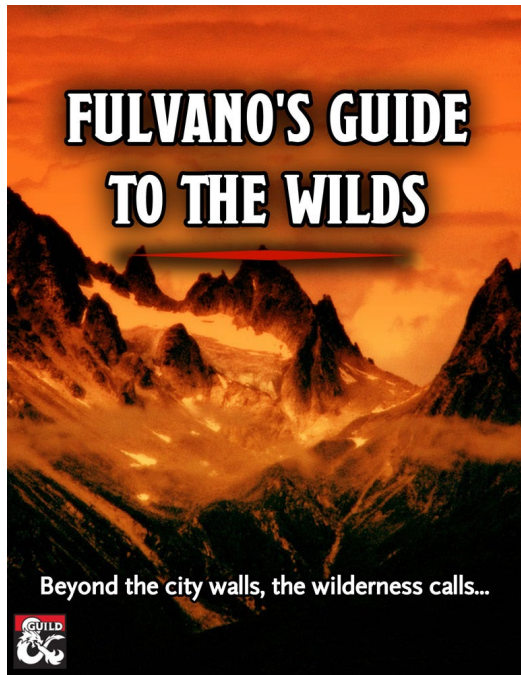
Find more fifth edition content from Paul Bimler and 5E Solo Gamebooks on [the DMs Guild](#)

SUPPORT RED NOSE DAY!

Wizards of the Coast has released a new fifth edition D&D adventure—available only on DMs Guild! All proceeds go to Red Nose Day, a non-profit organization fighting to end child poverty. *Return to the Glory* is designed for four-to-six orc characters from 6th to 8th level. Your people once dominated everything south of the mountains; you had the greatest, most advanced underground stronghold ever known to orc-kind. Then the cataclysm happened. Centuries have passed, and only a few tribes have survived. Now assembled under the banner of one cause, can you reclaim what was once yours!

WILDERNESS TRAVELS

At *D&D Live 2020: Roll w/ Advantage* we learned that a trip to Icewind Dale is in our immediate future. As the *Dungeon Master's* Guide says, sometimes the journey deserves as much time and attention as the destination. The DMs Guild has plenty of resources to make that trek across the wilderness toward the twinkling lights of Ten-Towns as memorable as possible.



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Fulvano's Guide to the Wilds, by Sam Sorensen

Price: Pay What You Want,
suggested price \$5 (PDF)

“Beyond the city walls, the wilderness calls...” That poetic line from the cover of this PDF captures the feel of this guide, which is written by the humble yet esteemed explorer, cartographer, and adventurer, Fulvano Rodolfini il Cerceranze. With advice on everything from travel pace and navigation to unclean water and modifying equipment, this guide expands the existing rules found in

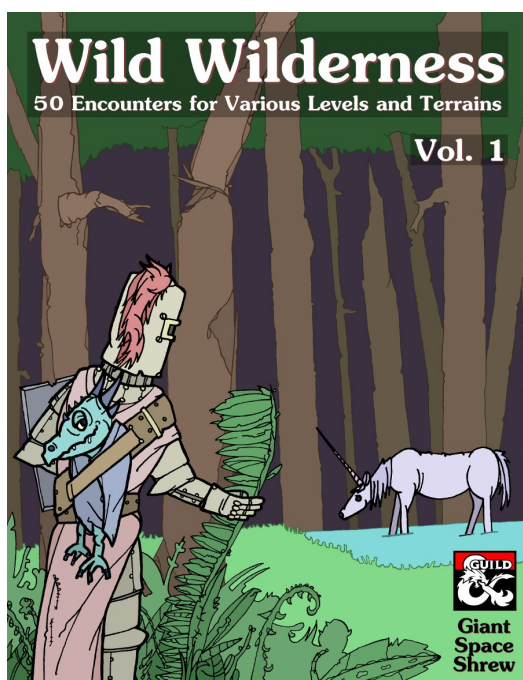
the *Player's Handbook*, *DMG* and *Xanathar's Guide to Everything*.

[MORE INFO](#)

Wild Wilderness Vol. 1: 50 Encounters, by A. Hagen and Peter Hagen

Price: \$3.99 (PDF)

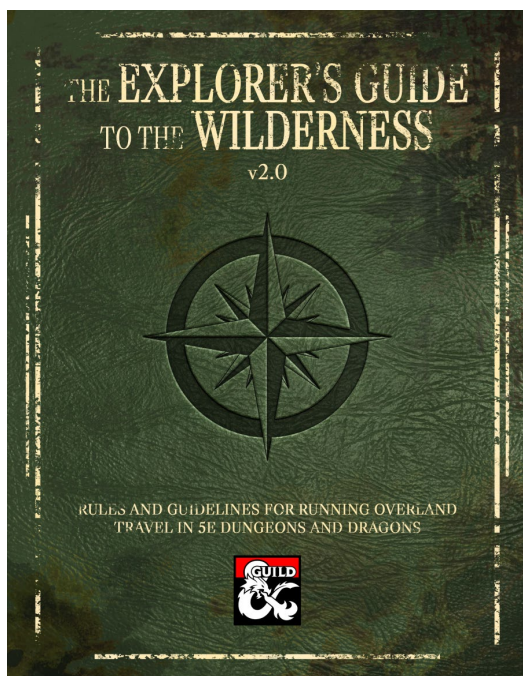
Helpfully indexed by terrain and character level, these fifty encounters provide short plot hooks that can be dropped into any campaign. They're perfect for



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creating both minor and potentially major experiences while travelling—joining a centaur’s drinking game or finding a pool in a glade might have far-reaching impacts well beyond that encounter.

MORE INFO



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The Explorer’s Guide to the Wilderness, by The Arcane Athenaeum

Price: Pay What You Want (PDF)

The wilds are dangerous and unpredictable, and simply getting where you want to go can be an adventure itself. This short guide treats environmental regions like monsters, using statistics such as Navigation, Resource, and Encounter to chart their difficulty.

MORE INFO

Encounters in the Savage Wilderness, by Jeff C. Stevens,



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Christopher Walz, Remley Farr, Luciella Elisabeth Scarlett, Tony Petrecca, Karl Resch, Florian Emmerich, J.V.C. Parry, Jean A. Headley, Courtney Hilbig, Lilah Isaacs, Ken Carcas, Jesse Peterson, Alex Clippinger, and Al Spader

Price: \$14.95 (PDF)

Encounters in the Wilderness is the fourth installment in the *Savage Encounters* series of supplements and brings together the work of a pool of writers,

artists and cartographers. The range of encounters is diverse thanks to those multiple inputs and although each experience comes with suggestions of where to place it in an Eberron campaign, they easily adapt to any world.

MORE INFO





Download *Legendary Beginnings—A Feast of Flavor* for free!

This ENnie-nominated 1st to 2nd-level adventure is suitable for all ages! A vital pass through the mountains on the wild borderlands between the Kingdom of Threll and the Faerie Realms has been closed by unknown forces. The citizens of Bakewell Tart are frightened and angry, unable to trade their marvelous goods with the fey beyond. This is a job for heroes with the strength, wit, and heart to try almost anything to bring peace and prosperity back to the frontier.

As social distancing is still a factor (please *Stay at Home. Play at Home.*), we're giving you the chance to download the PDF version, as well as offering a Fantasy Grounds version for remote play. These versions will be free for the life of this issue.

DOWNLOAD THE FREE PDF

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LEGENDARY BEGINNINGS



A Feast of Flavor

BY RACHEL VENTURA



A Feast of Flavor

By Rachel Ventura

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Welcome to Legendary Beginnings!

A Feast of Flavor is part of the series of family-friendly adventures and supplements from Legendary Games for the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*! This adventure can be played with the standard Pathfinder rules or with the special Pathfinder boxed set of simplified rules for beginners. Each one is packed with action, adventure, and danger, with opportunities to work as a team, whether you're straight-up fighting the bad guys or finding more creative solutions to the challenges those villains put in your path. The themes and style of this adventure are suitable for all ages, though they have been crafted with a particular eye toward younger gamers and those who are relatively new to tabletop roleplaying.

Roleplaying is a fantastic hobby, whether the people sitting down at your table are your own kids, neighbors, youth groups, scout troops, or just friends who've never sat down to roll the dice before. This product line gives you the material to create a fun-filled experience that sidesteps the more mature subject matter sometimes found in roleplaying products but without sacrificing the fun and excitement. Anytime you sit down with one of these adventures, you and your group are sure to have a **Legendary Beginning**!

SPECIAL ELECTRONIC FEATURES

We've hyperlinked this product internally from the Table of Contents and externally with links to the official **Pathfinder Reference Document** as well as **d20PFSRD**. If it is in the core rulebook, we generally didn't link to it unless the rule is an obscure one. The point is not to supersede the game books, but rather to help support you, the player, in accessing the rules, especially those from newer books or that you may not have memorized.

ABOUT LEGENDARY GAMES

Legendary Games is an all star team of authors and designers, founded by Clark Peterson of Necromancer Games, Inc. and managed by Jason Nelson, Legendary Games uses a cooperative, team-based approach to bring you, the Paizo fan, the best expansion material for your game. We are gamers and storytellers first, and we believe that passion shows in our products. So check us out, and Make Your Game Legendary!

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WHAT YOU WILL FIND INSIDE A FEAST OF FLAVOR

A *Feast of Flavor* takes your heroes into a world of adventure! On the wild borderlands between the Kingdom of Threll and the Faerie Realms, a vital pass through the mountains has been closed by forces unknown. The citizens of Bakewell Tart are frightened and angry, unable to trade their marvelous goods with the fanciful fey beyond and now, with all manner of mischief running loose in and around the town, supplies run low and neighbor turns against neighbor. And now rumors come that a sinister servant of the fallen witch queen may be behind it all, having broken free from her immortal prison and ready to seek her revenge! This is a job for heroes with the strength, wit, and heart to try almost anything to bring peace and prosperity back to the frontier. This adventure is suitable for all ages using the standard *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* or the boxed set for beginners.

The **Legendary Beginnings** series from Legendary Games is designed to create exciting adventures suitable for all ages, but especially designed for those new to roleplaying and those on the younger side. The Legendary Games tradition is to combine rich story and background, innovative layout, beautiful aesthetics, and excellence in design that is second to none, allowing you to enliven and enrich your campaign in amazing and exciting ways. This product is the latest in that tradition, and we hope you enjoy using it as much as we enjoyed making it. Game on!

—JASON NELSON



INTRODUCTION

A *Feast of Flavor* is a *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* adventure designed for newer players and Game Masters (GMs). It is written for a party of four to six 2nd-level characters. This adventure is considered a “sandbox” adventure. This means the player characters (PCs) can move around the area freely, attempting to solve several different mini quests, without being forced to visit the locations in any specific order. Quest Cards are included at the end of the book so the GM and players can keep track of the quests they have completed and those they are working on. By the end of the adventure, if the PCs have attempted most of the quests, they will gain enough experience points to reach 3rd level and will have earned treasure appropriate to that level.

A *Feast of Flavor* is intended to be a kid-friendly adventure that features a straightforward plot and basic themes of “fighting the bad guys,” “doing good,” and “thinking outside the box.” This adventure emphasizes diplomacy and roleplaying over straight combat. While the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* rules do provide many options for combat, the adventure also presents encounters, puzzles, and riddles that require social and thinking skills. Additionally, the adventure avoids “adult themes” and story elements that are too scary or gruesome. Ultimately, it is up to the grown-ups in a younger player’s life to determine what parts of a story are too much, but A *Feast of Flavor* should be safe for most kids who are old enough to understand the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* rules.

Additionally, the adventure is written with a simplified version of the rules in mind. Stat blocks are slightly modified to present only the most important information and different options are presented for some of the rules.

You can still use the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook* and other books in the Core Rules line with this adventure as well, if you and your players are ready for more complexity in your game.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In the kingdom of Threll, **KING AMBROSE I** is still celebrating the recent alliance forged with the nymph **QUEEN PRYOZHA**, an alliance made possible by the Zekerian Order's noble deeds in the Feyweald. A group of heroic knights defended Pryozha's forest from the influence of the evil witch queen **BAYAGA**. To strengthen this alliance, **KING AMBROSE I** directed the establishment of a settlement in the northern part of the kingdom, where citizens would have the opportunity to interact with faerie creatures from **PRYOZHA's** realm.

Heeding the king's call, a group of settlers gathered to build a small town north of Solaerin and east of the Northern Wall Mountains. Unsurprisingly, the folk who chose to live in a town that would frequently host creatures of the faerie realm turned out to be very interesting people, themselves. Honoring the faerie creatures' love of sweets and cakes, the settlers chose to call their town Bakewell Tart. Bakewell Tart's location is a prime spot for trade with the Verdant Court and travel to Solaerin. It also rests on a key road leading through a western mountain pass to some of the mines that provide Threllish crafters with ore and other materials. If King Ambrose I is successful in his goal of eventually making peace with the druids of the Great Northern Wood, Bakewell Tart will be an excellent staging point for those seeking to build new settlements in the North.

Many of the residents in Bakewell Tart moved from the western mining areas through the pass with the promise of peace and prosperity.

At first, this was exactly what they found. However, after a few years in the town, things have started to go awry. Many of the residents blame one another for small mishaps. Wrought with distrust already, the town members only became angrier when a mountain troll took up residence in the mountain pass and cut off residents of the new town from their homelands. The Threllish settlers have had enough and sent messages to King Ambrose I demanding change.

In the meantime, King Ambrose I and the Zekerian Order have been busy attempting to track down **YALDIRA**, Bayaga's servant who caused so much trouble in the Feyweald. Yaldira had gathered corrupted animals and fey creatures to build an army for the Witch Queen. When the Order's knights disrupted her plans, Yaldira managed to escape. The Order believes that she fled into the Fey Realm. In truth, when Bayaga fell, Yaldira lost much of her power and was temporarily trapped in the Fey Realm. Queen Pryozha's guards searched the realm but were unable to find her. They believe she somehow made her way back to the Material Realm. Yaldira is an evil forlarren woman, a corrupted half-fey creature, who was already twisted and spiteful before she contracted Bayaga's unseelie curse. Although she has lost her connection to the witch queen, she still bears the curse and draws on its dark powers to aid her.

After Yaldira returned to Threll, she immediately began looking for a way to exact her revenge against King Ambrose I and the Zekerian Knights who thwarted her. Suspecting this, the Order has made sure all knights, even the greenest amongst them, know of Yaldira's sarcastic tongue, deadly abilities, mischievous ways, and skill at making quick escapes.

King Ambrose I has little time or patience for the small complaints of townsfolk, for there are

10

CHOCOLATE
MOUNTAINS
FOOTHILLS

BERRY
BUSHES

9



1/4 mi.



☆8 Bakewell
Tart



2



7

3

FOREST

MAPLE TREE FOREST



4

1

to Solaerin

FOREST

to Feyweald

more dangerous issues occupying his attention. Even still, he is a compassionate king, and the grievances of Bakewell Tart's citizens demand attention. Therefore, he summons a group of new knights to investigate the town and find the source of the people's frustrations.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Reports from unhappy residents of Bakewell Tart have reached the ears of King Ambrose I, and he is not happy. The Zekerian Order, the elite group of heroes loyal to the people of Threll, sends the party to explore the town and surrounding region. The adventurers must determine what is causing the distress of the town members and nearby residents, then resolve the problems to ensure the people are happy and safe.

The adventure begins as the party approaches the southern edge of Bakewell Tart. They have the opportunity to explore the outer area, as well as the town itself, to determine why the residents are displeased. What they find is a group of irritated inhabitants who are exasperated and cannot carry on their normal way of life for various reasons. Trade has completely stopped in the town and residents are beginning to have stockpiles of supplies they cannot use, while running short on others. The people need to reconcile with one another and begin working together again.

Behind the scenes, however, there are bigger forces at work and even greater foes to face. Can the adventurers find the source of these disruptions and set things right so this corner of Threll can once again be at peace?

THE ZEKERIAN ORDER

This adventure presumes that the characters start as members of the Zekerian Order, also known as the Order of the Shooting Star. You can use this premise to explain why the PCs are initially working together and to encourage the players to focus their choices on doing good things during the adventure.

Founded just over 300 years ago, the Zekerian Order has grown as the kingdom of Threll has developed. The Order's leadership trains and empowers its members, known as Knights even though the members do not gain their status from the king or queen.

The Order's purpose is to protect and aid the people of Threll. Zekerian Knights are loyal to the Crown only as long as the Crown serves the needs of the people. There have been many times in the past centuries when the Crown and the Order have disagreed on how best to serve Threll. Currently, the Order is on good terms with King Ambrose I and his court.

If your players decide not to be members of the Zekerian Order in your game, you can still have the PCs' mission come from the Order via King Ambrose. He grants each of the PCs a *Zekerian amulet* as a sign of how important he and the Order believe this mission to be.

ZEKERIAN AMULET

Aura faint conjuration (healing); **CL** 3rd
Slot neck; **Price** 750 gp; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

The image of a shooting star crossing a night sky inscribes a shield shaped silver amulet.

Once per day, as a free action, the amulet's wearer can draw power from the amulet to heal 1d8+1 points of damage, as though she had received a *cure light wounds* spell. As part of her alliance with Threll, Nymph Queen Pryozha has imbued the Order's amulets with living magic, such that their healing power increases over time, granting healing as a *cure* spell cast by a cleric of the PCs' level (2d8+3 points of healing at 3rd level; 3d8+5, at 5th; etc.).

Alternatively, if the wearer is reduced to 0 or fewer hit points and has not yet used the amulet that day, the magic activates automatically as a free action. If the healing is enough to restore the wearer to 1 or more hit points, she remains conscious, does not fall prone, and can otherwise act normally on her next turn.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *cure light wounds*; **Cost** 375 gp



Although the encounters of the adventure are presented in a specific order, the sandbox nature of the story means they can easily choose to bypass any of the encounters and go directly to Bakewell Tart. If the PCs decide not to investigate certain locations or speak to NPCs they encounter, let them proceed. There is a decent chance they will have to come back to the encounter to get a piece of information or an item that will help them deal with the town's problems later on.

USEFUL THINGS

Encourage PCs to gather objects they may find useful along the way. If the PCs have played the adventure *Into the Feyweald*, remind them of how the PCs were able to avoid fighting an angry bird monster (a clubnek) by using verbena they had picked up along the way to keep it calm. If they didn't play that adventure, you may wish to tell the story as an example from other heroes.

This is good way to weave the PCs' actions in with the encounters. If the PCs have an empty jug or bottle, they may collect some sap. If they collect pebbles, PCs may use them later to skip rocks across the lake with the goblins. If the PCs gather some of the fallen leaves, they may impress the brownie in the toadstool ring. Even if they do not initially collect any items, use the hints later in the adventure to remind them to come back for these items.

STARTING THE ADVENTURE

Once the players are ready to begin the adventure, read the following:

Headed east from Solaerin, you have reached the northern road that parallels the coast of Northrunner Sound. The Northern Road runs through an open meadow and in the distance you see a thick forest of maple trees. On the journey, you've discussed many things, including how irritated King Ambrose I is with the many complaints from the town of Bakewell Tart. He beseeched you to return only when the town had found peace. Surely a few annoyed merchants and shopkeepers couldn't be that hard to handle, could they?

All the players know one another from the Zekerian Order or by some other means. They have been on other, similar quests before, but it has been some time since they have seen each other. Therefore, as the PCs travel the road from the Zekerian Order headquarters in Solaerin to Bakewell Tart, encourage the players to discuss what their characters have been doing since they last saw one another and describe the relationships they have with one another. Let the players share stories of their past adventures, as if reminiscing. Reward each PC 50 XP for telling a short adventuring tale.

King Ambrose I gave the PCs 100 gold pieces each to buy supplies for their quest, with the promise of 300 more gold pieces each after they complete their investigation. You can also allow the PCs to purchase equipment after they receive the first 100 gp, since they would likely have spent a short period in Solaerin's shopping district preparing for the adventure.

PART I: MAPLE SYRUP AND BACON

1A. THE NORTHERN ROAD

Red maple trees line a sandy path headed north. Gorgeous maple leaves, so beautiful they could be pressed and dried into decorations, have fallen to the ground. Small flat pebbles that would make perfect skipping rocks adorn the path. A cool breeze blows from the west and causes several bright red leaves to float in midair.

Although Fall is in the air, it seems too early in the year for a chill to be setting in. In the distance ahead, you notice there is something strange about the trunks of some of the trees.

PCs investigating the trees find that many of them have severe damage to their trunks, with bark peeled away and the wood splintered nearly all the way around from a few feet off the ground down to the roots. Those succeeding a DC 12 **Knowledge (nature)** or **Knowledge (local)** skill check recognize the damage on the maple tree trunks as boar marks. A successful **Perception** check of DC 10 reveals the marks are recent, indicating the animal may still be nearby. Tree sap, the kind used to make maple syrup, is dripping from one of the trees.

Development: For now, the PCs can explore the area without incident. The boar attacks them the next time they return (see encounter 1B).

1B. BOAR ATTACK (CR 2; XP 600)

If the PCs return to the area, the boar charges out of the trees from the west and attacks the closest PC.

Creatures: If the players know that the boar is in the area, either because of the Brownie's warning or the rumors in town, they are not surprised; otherwise, a successful DC 14

Perception check allows them to hear the boar crashing through the trees before reaching the party. PCs who fail the **Perception** check are unable to act in the surprise round. The boar uses the surprise round to move closer, allowing it to make a charge attack on the first full round (+2 bonus to attack roll and -2 penalty to armor class). The boar fights to the death. If the players flee, the boar does not follow them out of the area.

You hear rustling and crashing sounds among the trees to the west just before a black boar comes bounding out of the brush. Its eyes are bloodshot, its tusks are sharp, and it is charging right toward the party!

BOAR

CR 2

XP 600

Hit Points 18

Initiative +0

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Senses low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +6

DEFENSE

Armor Class 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14

Fortitude Save +6, Reflex Save +3, Will Save +1

Defensive Abilities ferocity

OFFENSE

Melee (standard action) gore +4 (1d8+4)

STATISTICS

STR +3, DEX +0, CON +7, INT -4, WIS +1, CHA -3

Skills Perception +6

Treasure: The PCs can sell the boar's body to Kalmar at the Apple Market for 50 gold pieces.

2. GEESE ON THE BANK (CR 2; XP 600)

Continuing up the path, you hear squawking and honking sounds from the east. At the tree line, six geese meander along the edge of a lake. The bank is sandy and shallow. The geese peck at bugs along the water's edge and in the grass just off to the side of the path. Occasionally, a goose honks or hisses at another goose that gets too close.

PCs succeeding **Knowledge (geography)** DC 10 know this lake is called Sapphire Lake.

Creatures: These geese are not friendly. If the PCs move within 20 feet of any goose, they all attack. Throwing rocks or pebbles scares the geese to the southeast and allows the PCs one surprise round if the PCs succeed on any of the following checks: **Intimidate** DC 12, **Acrobatics** DC 12, **Survival** DC 10, or a successful ranged attack roll.

GOOSE (6)

CR 1/6

XP 65 each

Hit Points 3

Initiative +2

Speed 10 ft. (2 squares), fly 40 ft. (average), swim 30 ft.

Senses low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

Armor Class 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12

Fortitude Save +1, Reflex Save +4, Will Save +2

OFFENSE

Melee bite +4 (1d3-4)

STATISTICS

STR -4, DEX +2, CON -1, INT -4, WIS +2, CHA -2

Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Finesse

Skills Fly +6, Perception +3, Swim +2

Treasure: The PCs can collect the primary wing feathers of a slain goose to be used as quills or sold at the hardware store in town for one silver piece each. A single goose produces 20 quill feathers. If the PCs defeat the geese without killing them, they can spend 30 minutes or so and gather up to 100 quill feathers from the ground along the banks of the lake.

Development: If the PCs knock out or kill at least three geese, the rest of them retreat to the southeast in the direction of the toadstools. If the PCs leave the area and return, the geese are back, minus any that the PCs previously killed. The PCs gain no experience for defeating the geese a second time.

3. SAPPHIRE LAKE (CR 2; XP 600)

The lake is still and quiet. Tall grasses grow along the southern edge, as well as cattails, dune grasses, and wildflowers. The water is clear and calm and reflects the sky above as a deep blue. Sunlight reflects off of tiny ripples, sparkling like sapphires. Suddenly, you hear a loud “Ker-plunk,” followed by the same sound a few moments later. The second splash is followed by an angry, growling-crying-whining noise.

Toward the grasses, three short goblins are attempting to skip rocks across the lake. They each have a handful of rocks in one hand. The first one throws a rock and manages to skip it 3 times across the water. The goblin hoots and hollers in excitement and glee. He dances around in circles and then stops dead in his tracks as he notices he has company. A grin filled with needle-sharp teeth spreads wide across his face.

“Giggle, Wiggle, funny strangers. Come to ruin the fun?”

Skip the rocks or face the danger, farthest out to see who’s won!”

By succeeding on a DC 14 **Knowledge (local)** check, the PCs know the goblins’ names are **FLATROCK**, **ROT-TOOTH**, and **SINKY** and that they hang around here eating fish and challenging adventurers to skipping rocks. However, the rock skipping usually ends in bloodshed, because the goblins do not take kindly to those who refuse them or to those who beat them. If they fail the check, the PCs can simply ask what the goblin’s names are and what the goblins are doing.

Explain to the players that the goblins’ behavior shows them to be very bad sports. Flatrock smacks Sinky when he makes a better throw, and Rot-tooth threatens to eat Flatrock’s legs when he laughs at a bad throw from Rot-tooth. It’s clear that the PCs can only avoid a fight with the goblins by letting them win. If



the PCs accept the challenge of skipping rocks and let the goblins win, the goblins rejoice and allow the PCs to pass. If the PCs refuse to play or beat the goblins at the game, then the goblins attack.

Finding the right kinds of rocks in this area is extremely difficult because the goblins have gathered almost all of them to skip. In order to participate, the PCs must supply their own rocks. A successful **Perception** check of DC 16 reveals a few hidden flat stones that are very flat enough among the tall grass. If the PCs retreat to retrieve the pebbles from the path, the goblins follow them, ready to attack if the PCs do not find the pebbles within two minutes.

The PCs must skip three rocks each. For each attempt, have the players roll percentile dice (two d10s, with one die representing the tens place and the second die representing the

ones place). Tally up the total number of skips for each player and compare the number to the total number of skips for each goblin. The goblins cheat, of course, and actually throw four rocks each, so tally four rolls for each of them. All three goblins must beat all of the PCs.

In order to lose at skipping rocks and avoid conflict with the goblins, the PCs can reduce their chances of winning by voluntarily taking penalties to their percentile rolls, but they must not make it too obvious. Each PC can attempt a **Bluff** check before each throw. To reduce their percentile roll by 10%, the PCs must overcome a DC 10. For each additional 10% penalty on their throw, the Bluff check DC increases by +2. If the PC fails a Bluff check, the goblins accuse them of “Not even trying!” and attack.



% TOTAL	# OF SKIPS
<50	0
50–64	1
65–79	2
80–89	3
90–100	4

GOBLIN WARRIORS (3)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

Hit Points 6

Initiative +6

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares)

Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception –1

DEFENSE

Armor Class 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14

Fortitude Save +3, Reflex Save +2, Will Save –1

OFFENSE

Melee (standard action) dogslicer +2 (1d4/19–20)

Ranged shortbow +4 (1d4/x3)

Ranged skipping rock +4 (1d2)

STATISTICS

STR +0, DEX +2, CON +1, INT +0, WIS –1, CHA –2

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Ride +10, Stealth +10, Swim +4

ITEMS

Equipment leather armor, light wooden shield, dogslicer, short bow with 20 arrows, rocks, 20 gp, 6 cooked fish

Reward the PCs with 600 XP whether they kill the goblins or gamble with them. If the PCs successfully lose when gambling with the goblins, award each PC with 50 additional XP.

Development: The PCs can give the cooked fish the goblins are carrying to the pseudodragon later in the adventure. If the PCs do not take the fish from the goblins or if they eat them all, they may need to return here for more. After the PCs have skipped rocks with the goblins and left the area, the goblins do not return on future visits.

To catch more fish, PCs must succeed on a DC 12 **Survival** check or attempt ranged attacks against them. Fish have AC 13. Ranged attacks suffer a –4 penalty for shooting into water,

but the PC automatically catches the fish on a successful hit. Award 50 XP for each fish a PC catches (up to 4 fish).

If you want to encourage the PCs to visit the willow tree and hardware store, you can require a willow switch to make a fishing pole or net and a hook from the shop. Otherwise, assume the PCs have basic fishing equipment.

PART II: MUSHROOMS AND ONIONS

4. TOADSTOOL RING (CR 1; XP 400)

The air is damp, and the foliage in this part of the forest becomes denser and more vine-like. Heavy carpets of thick moss grow over the trees, in some cases hanging off like drapery. The grass is soft and covered in dew.

Ahead, the greenery opens to reveal a wide ring of mushrooms on the forest floor. A small creature, no more than 2 feet tall, sits crying on a large red and white toadstool in the middle of the ring. By its great sobs and tear-stained cheeks, you can tell the creature is clearly distraught, even though it wears a wide grin on its face. The creature's clothing is made of leaves, palms, and other plants. There are holes and rips in the poor creature's outfit, where the plants have dried out and begun to crumble.

PCs succeeding a DC 10 **Knowledge (nature)** check recognize this creature as a brownie. The brownie's name is **RHUBARB** (Roo-barb). PCs can choose to roleplay the dialogue or roll a **Diplomacy** check (DC 16) to change Rhubarb's attitude from indifferent to friendly and allow the PCs to learn the source of its sorrows.

"It happened the other day as I was collecting leaves for my outfit! It came out of nowhere! A great, black, bristly boar with a giant snout. Oh, and tusks as sharp as knives! It was crazy, I tell you, crazy!

It chased after me and tried to pin me to a tree. I zigged and zagged and barely escaped! Any time I try to return to the grove, it comes crashing out of nowhere and chases me off. My leaves are drying and crumbling. If I do not gather new ones soon I won't have any clothes at all! Only the red leaves will do. You see, I am a southern maple brownie. We only ever dress in red."

If the PCs have already collected leaves from the maple grove and offer them to the brownie, he is impressed and very grateful. However, regardless of how many leaves the PCs initially give the brownie, he still needs more, claiming he must set aside leaves to get him through the seasons when the leaves are no longer red. He asks the PCs to gather them for him in exchange for a special gift.

Rhubarb will not leave the mushroom ring, because its fey magic keeps him safe from the boar. Rhubarb does not believe the boar is gone, no matter what they do, so the PCs must gather the leaves and come back to him. If the PCs return with more leaves, the brownie gives each one of them a magical vest called a *toadstool vest*, and a large basket of edible mushrooms.

Development: Award the PCs 400 XP for helping the brownie and making a friend. If the PCs choose to attack the brownie, instead, they receive the usual XP but word of their deed eventually reaches King Ambrose I and causes problems for him. The king needs to prove his ability to work with Queen Pryozha and her people before she will help him build an alliance with the druids in the Great Northern Wood. Neither the King nor the Zekerian Order would be happy to hear that the PCs are ignoring peaceful options and attacking creatures who seek their help. Keep this in mind for all the encounters in this adventure.



TOADSTOOL VEST

Aura faint abjuration; **CL** 5th
Slot chest; **Price** 500 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Fleshy mushroom caps and inverted fungus gills are woven together to create an extraordinarily thick, warm vest which is smooth and velvety to the touch. When the vest is compressed, it recoils immediately, granting the wearer a damage resistance of 5 from bludgeoning weapons. Magic preserves the toadstools from decay and damage.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *defending glyph*^{Deep Magic}; **Cost** 250 gp

SLIGHTLY ADVANCED SPELLCASTING

You can use this adventure with either the simplified rules in the boxed set for beginners or the normal *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* rules. Some of the creatures in this adventure can use spell-like abilities, which work just like the spell of the same name, but can be used a certain number of times per day. Each use requires a standard action.

If you are playing with simplified rules, you may not have access to the rules for some of these spell effects. You can choose to ignore these spells and just use spells available to you, or you can use the rules below for some of the more advanced spells, instead. The effects are described as though they are cast by the monsters in this adventure against 1st- or 2nd-level PCs. The DCs for any required saves are given in the creature's stat block.

Alter Self: You can assume the form of any Small or Medium-sized humanoid. If the form you assume grants any of the following abilities, you gain those abilities, too: darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent, and swim 30 ft.

Color Spray: This spell affects all targets in a 15-foot cone that fail a Will save. Targeted characters are knocked unconscious, blinded, and stunned for 2d4 rounds, then blinded and stunned for 1d4 more rounds, then stunned for 1 round.

Dancing Lights: You create one faintly glowing, humanoid shape or up to four glowing lights that look like torchlight or glowing spheres and radiate light as a torch. The lights have to stay within 10 feet of each other and within 100 feet of you, but can move at your mental command up to 100 feet per round.

Dimension Door: You can instantly move up to 400 feet away. After using this spell, you can't take any actions until your next turn.

Ghost Sound: You can create an illusion of sound. You decide what sound to create when you cast the spell and can't change it afterward. The sound lasts for one round per caster level, but cannot be louder than the noise of 4 humans shouting per caster level (up to 40 humans). You can use *ghost sound* to enhance the effectiveness of *silent image*. Those who hear the sounds and have reason to suspect that they are an illusion can make a Will save to disbelieve them.

Hideous Laughter: This spell affects a single target that fails a Will save. The character laughs uncontrollably, falls prone, and can take no actions other than laughing for 1 round per caster level. The affected character is not considered helpless.

Lesser Confusion: This spell lasts one round and affects one target that fails a Will save. Roll a 1d4. On a 1, the character acts normally. On a 2, he does nothing but babble incoherently. On a 3, he attacks himself with whatever he is holding for 1d8 points of damage plus STR. On a 4, he attacks the nearest creature (even an ally) with whatever weapon or spell he has at hand.

Magic Mouth: You can use this illusion to cause an object or creature to suddenly form a mouth and speak a message up to 25 words long when creatures or events within a radius of 15 feet per caster level meet the visible or audible conditions you set when casting the spell. The message cannot last longer than 10 minutes, but the spell remains in effect until it has been triggered.

Mending: If you have all the pieces of a broken object, you can repair 1d4 points of damage done to it. This spell does not work on constructs.

Mirror Image: You create a number of illusory images of yourself, which attackers may aim at instead of you. If an attack hits you, roll randomly to determine if the attack struck you, or one of your illusions. An image disappears when struck by an attack.

Plane Shift: You can move yourself to another plane of existence, though you appear 5 to 500 miles away from your intended location.

Prestidigitation: You can create a variety of simple magical effects, like slowly lifting a 1-pound or lighter object, cleaning or dirtying or changing the color a 1-foot cube of material, heat up or cool down or flavor 1 pound of food, or create small, fragile objects from thin air. The spell cannot harm or distract anyone and nothing created by it can be used as a tool for anything else. The effects of the spell last for 1 hour.

Silent Image: You can create a visual illusion. The illusion can only be seen, not felt or heard. The illusion, including any movements it makes, must fit within a volume of four 10-ft. cubes plus one 10-ft. cube per caster level. The image lasts as long as you concentrate on it. You can use *ghost sound* to enhance the effectiveness of *silent image*. Those who see or otherwise interact with the illusion and have another reason to suspect that it isn't real can make a Will save to disbelieve them. If they succeed, the illusion becomes translucent and can be ignored.

Ventriloquism: You can make your voice (or any vocal sound you can make) seem to come from somewhere else within 30 feet. Those who hear the sound can make a Will save to recognize that it is an illusion.

RHUBARB THE BROWNIE

CR 1

XP 400 (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2*)

Hit Points 4

Initiative +8

Speed 20 ft.

Senses low-light vision; Perception +8

DEFENSE

Armor Class 17, touch 17, flat-footed 12

Fortitude Save +1, Reflex Save +6, Will Save +4; +2 vs. illusions

Defensive Abilities spell resistance 12

DR 5/cold iron

OFFENSE

Melee short sword +6 (1d2–2/19–20)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +10)

At will—*dancing lights*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*

1/day—*dimension door* (self only), *lesser confusion* (DC 14), *mirror image* (1d4+2 images), *ventriloquism* (DC 14)

STATISTICS

STR –2, DEX +4, CON +1, INT +2, WIS +2, CHA +3

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +8 (+4 jump), Bluff +7, Craft (any one) +6, Escape Artist +8, Handle Animal +4, Perception +8, Sense Motive +6, Stealth +16 (+20 in forest)

Languages Common, Elven, Gnome, Sylvan

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Spell Resistance Whenever a spell is cast on a brownie, the caster must succeed at a DC 12 caster level check (d20 + caster level). If the check fails, the spell does not affect the brownie.

ITEMS

Treasure toadstool vest, mushrooms

5. ONIONS, GARLIC, AND LEEKS (CR 3; XP 1,000)

You've stumbled across what seems to be a disorganized garden. Four-foot tall green stalks grow in shambolic rows with giant white flowers growing on top like snowballs. Onions! Leeks surround the outer rows of the garden alternating with garlic and green onions, and beautiful yellow and orange marigolds adorn the garden's edges. A tiny dragon quietly tends the garden, and you can hear it sobbing softly.

If the players are young in age, you may eliminate the dice mechanics in “ONIONS, GARLIC, AND LEEKS” and instead use the cut out the cards in the back of this book as a normal memory matching game. Each player takes a turn turning over two cards. If they are a match, they keep the cards and add the items to their equipment. When a player matches the gopher cards, combat begins, and the player who matched the gopher cards gets a surprise round to attack.

When they see the tiny dragon, have any characters with ranks in **Knowledge (arcana)** attempt a DC 10 check to reveal that this tiny creature is a pseudodragon. Surpassing a DC 12 on the check also reveals that pseudodragons will sometimes share information in exchange for food. If the PCs offer the pseudodragon fish, cheese, or eggs she befriends the party and tells them telepathically of her troubles.

If the PCs attack the tiny dragon, she flees. If they approach her calmly, she initially growls or hides behind the plants in the garden.

A successful **Sense Motive** check (DC 12) allows the PCs to determine that the creature's behavior means she is hungry. Additionally, PCs may succeed on a DC 12 **Perception** check to notice minor damage to the garden. If they notice the damage, a DC 14 **Knowledge (nature)** check is required to determine that a gopher has recently attacked the garden.

“I tend this garden and deliver onions to the pub in town in exchange for meat. But a gopher is vexing me. He will not leave my garden alone. He keeps pulling my onions underground or eating the roots of my beautiful marigolds. I've tried catching him but he just keeps using his tunnels to escape.”

The PCs must first catch the gopher by playing a simple matching game, using the grid of onions, leeks, garlic, flowers, and gophers shown here. You may also use the cut out cards



in the back of this book and lay the pictures face down in a 4 by 4 grid.

In the first round, each player starts their turn by rolling two d4s to determine which image they reveal (or which card they turn over). The first d4 roll is the number of columns across and the second d4 is the number of rows down. Then, the player rolls again using the same method for the second image. If they have a match, they receive that item (red onion, yellow onion, green onion, wild leek, garlic, yellow marigold, and orange marigold) and both of the matched images are removed from the

board. If the matched item is the gopher, the PCs must fight the gopher at the end of the round. Make sure each player has at least one turn (one complete round).

In the second and later rounds (only played if the gopher is not found in the first), each player first rolls two d4s for their first card and then chooses to either roll for the match or select a card from a known location from the previous round.

If the players each have 3 turns (3 complete rounds) and do not catch the gopher, combat

immediately begins and the gopher gets one surprise round.

Treasure: If the PCs beat the gopher, the pseudodragon is extremely grateful and offers each PC an armload of onions and two stones from her collection (semi-precious stones worth 100 gp each).

PSEUDODRAGON

CR 1

XP 400

Hit Points 15

Initiative +2

Speed 15 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Senses blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE

Armor Class 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14

Fortitude Save +4, Reflex Save +5, Will Save +4

Immune paralysis, sleep; SR 12

OFFENSE

Melee sting +6 (1d3–2 plus poison), bite +6 (1d2–2)

STATISTICS

STR –2, DEX +2, CON +13, INT +0, WIS +1, CHA +0

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Diplomacy +5, Fly +15, Perception +6, Sense Motive +6, Stealth +19 (+23 in forests), Survival +6;

Languages Draconic; telepathy (60 ft.)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison A creature stung by a pseudodragon must succeed on a DC 14 Fortitude save or fall asleep for 1 minute. Each minute thereafter, he must attempt a new Fortitude save at the same DC or remain sleeping for another minute. The poison's effects end after the first successful Fortitude save or after the 10 minutes, whichever comes first.

DIRE GOPHER

CR 2

XP 600

Hit Points 21

Initiative +1

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft.

Senses low-light vision, scent; tremorsense 20 ft.;

Perception +6

DEFENSE

Armor Class 16, touch 14, flat-footed 13

Fortitude Save +6, Reflex Save +6, Will Save +1

OFFENSE

Melee bite +4 (1d3+1), 2 claws +4 (1d2+1)

STATISTICS

STR 12, DEX 17, CON 16, INT 2, WIS 10, CHA 6

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Improved Sunder

Skills Escape Artist +7, Perception +6

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Tremorsense If they are in contact with the ground, dire gophers can pinpoint the location of any creature also in contact with the ground within 20 feet.

ITEMS

Treasure Onions



Cranberry Caves



5ft



6a

6b

6c

PART III: CRANBERRIES AND BLUE CHEESE

The party's trail takes them near the entrance to a small mine, which the main inhabitant calls Cranberry Cave, because of the rubies he found there. The mine is occupied by a svirfneblin (a creature also known as a deep gnome) and a few other residents. As with other places the PCs visit, there are troubles within these caverns.

6A. CRANBERRY CAVE (CR VARIES; XP 1,600)

This area boasts rocky terrain. Few plants grow here other than patches of rock grasses and small bushes. There is a natural cave opening at the base of a nearby hill.

PCs succeeding on a **Perception** check (DC 12) hear cats meowing in the mine.

The cave is dark and musty. A damp, fungus smell lingers in the air. Dripping sounds echo toward you from further in the cave. The stalagmites and stalactites sparkle in the darkness. Moving deeper into the cave, it is easy to find evidence of inhabitants in the cave. Wood planks cover sections of flooding cave floor while wooden beams hold up small tunnels that diverge from the main passageway. A trio of cats meanders out of one side tunnel and into another. Two stone pillars divide the next section of the cavern. Just past the pillars is a large gathering of cats, all of them rolling on the ground among sprigs of a leafy, green herb.

Trap: If the PCs move slowly into the back section of the cave, they have a chance to observe that the pillars are loaded with arrows by succeeding on a DC 20 **Perception** check. Recklessly charging in sets off the trap. Whether

they avoid the trap or not, surviving PCs earn XP from the trap.

PILLAR OF 1,000 ARROWS

CR 2

XP 600

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Duration** 10 rounds; **Reset** manual
Effect Atk +10 ranged (x1d4) (1d8 nonlethal/x3); multiple targets (all targets in the chamber)

When the trap is sprung, the pillar begins to rotate.

One round later, the pillar fires blunt arrows at every character in the room. The trap runs for 10 full rounds, after which it is exhausted and must be manually reloaded. Each round, the pillar fires 1d4 blunt arrows at each character in the chamber. A character holding a tower shield can gain total cover as a standard action, avoiding all of these attacks. A character standing behind the character holding the tower shield gains a +4 cover bonus; any other characters lined up in this fashion only gain a +2 cover bonus to AC.

Once they get past the trap, the PCs can get a better look at what the cats are doing. PCs can attempt a DC 10 **Knowledge (nature)** check to recognize that the cats are rubbing on catnip. Before they get deeper into the cave, they encounter the mine's current inhabitant.

Creatures: **Guy**, the svirfneblin who gathers rubies from the mine, easily detects the PCs unless they each succeed on a **Stealth** check. (Compare the PC's d20 roll + Stealth bonus to Guy's d20 roll + Perception bonus. If they wish to remain unseen, the PCs must match or exceed Guy's perception check). Guy automatically detects the PCs if they set off the trap. When he first sees them, he boldly challenges them.

"Stop where you are or suffer more than a few arrows!"

The PCs can calm the gnome down by succeeding on a DC 19 **Diplomacy** check. If they fail, Guy demands that they leave the mines and attacks them, if they don't. Guy does not fight

to the death and gives up when it looks like the PCs are going to win. Even if they manage to calm him down, he works himself into a frenzy every few moments, yelling at the cats who simply ignore him. If the PCs defeat him, or after a few moments of conversation, he begins to cry large, sad tears.

If the PCs question him, he explains that this mine is full of rubies, but the tunnel he needs to pass through to continue gathering them is very narrow and swarming with rats. Guy cannot stand the little rodents.

If they ask him if he is the one who has stolen the town's cats, he admits to luring them away from town with catnip. He had hoped the cats would get rid of the rats. He first tried to get rid of the rats with poison but the hardware store didn't have enough to do the job. When he saw all the cats roaming the town, he knew what he had to do.

Unfortunately, the cats are only interested in playing in the catnip. They won't go down the tunnel where the rats are. Guy believes the tunnels are cursed, but admits he might have inhaled too much catnip, himself. He tells the PCs that he didn't mean to cause trouble and that they can have the cats back.

If the PCs try to take the gnome to Jelly Jail Jake for stealing the cats, he offers them a deal instead.

"Say, instead of taking me in, I'll make you a deal. You take the cats back and tell ol' Jake no harm, no foul. You all seem smart enough. You might even convince him to pay you a reward for just returning the cats."

In the meantime, if you stay here a bit longer and help me clear the rats out of the tunnel, I'll give you a beautiful ruby worth any price Jake is willing to pay to bring me in. You'll double your money!"

If the PCs have not visited the town yet and don't ask Guy where he got all the cats, he doesn't admit to stealing them. He just says that they aren't helping him, and asks the PCs to clear out the rats, instead. If they succeed, Guy turns the cats over to the PCs and asks them to take them to town.

If the PCs agree to help him, Guy leads them to the narrow tunnels. A swarm of rats covers the floors.

Treasure: If the PCs kill the rats, Guy is true to his word and gives the PCs a large ruby worth 500 gold pieces.

Development: If the PCs decide to take Guy in to Jelly Jail Jake, he resists and the PCs have to knock him out. The PCs gain no XP for killing the gnome.

Guy also informs the PCs before they leave that if they explore the next tunnel entrance down, they might find some more valuable gems in what he calls the "Blue Cheese Cavern." He explains that the molds in there make him sneeze too much so he no longer mines that part of the cavern. He promises there are some good finds in there though. He is telling the truth about the cave and the reason he stays away from it.

When they are ready to take the cats back to town, have the players brainstorm ways they can herd the cats together so they can return them to the town. They can use the catnip to lure them, but this will still require multiple DC 15 ability checks (most likely using Charisma to encourage the cats to go in the right direction or Dexterity to herd them.). Reward each PC who gives a credible idea for capturing or rounding up the cats with 25 XP. Have the party decide on one plan and implement it.

GUY THE SVIRFNEBLIN

CR 1

XP 400

Hit Points 15

Initiative +2

Speed 20 ft. (4 squares)

Senses darkvision 120 ft., Low-light Vision; **Perception** +6

DEFENSE

Armor Class 15, touch 15, flat-footed 11

Fortitude Save +6, **Reflex Save** +6, **Will Save** +2

Defensive Abilities spell resistance 12

OFFENSE

Melee (standard action) warhammer +3 (1d6+1/x3)

Ranged (standard action) light crossbow +4 (1d6/19–20)

Special Attacks dwarven and reptilian hatred

Spells (caster level 1st)

2nd—*blindness/deafness*, *blur*

1st—*disguise self*

STATISTICS

STR +1, **DEX** +2, **CON** +2, **INT** +0, **WIS** +0, **CHA** –1

Skills Heal +4, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +4, Perception +8, Stealth +14

ITEMS

Equipment light crossbow with 10 bolts, warhammer

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dwarven and Reptilian Hatred The svirfneblin gets a +1 on its attack rolls against dwarven and reptilian humanoids.

Spell Resistance Whenever a spell is cast on the svirfneblin, the caster must succeed at a DC 12 caster level check (d20 + caster level). If the check fails, the spell does not affect the svirfneblin.

6B. RAT TUNNELS (CR 2; XP 600)

This tunnel is very narrow, forcing you to move single file, and making you even more aware of the weight of stone and earth pressing in around you from all sides. Ahead, at the edge of your vision, the floor seems to be covered in a thick gray carpet that moves. You quickly realize that the “carpet” is actually a mass of rats, many of which turn their beady eyes on you.

Creatures: This area is inhabited by a large colony of rats, which mass together to attack intruders. The narrowness of the passages makes fighting the rats even more challenging.

The swarm can form itself into a string of four 5-foot squares or group together into one 10-foot square. The PCs may come up with clever solutions, such as using smoke, fire, or other means to drive the rats out of the tunnels, but will need to make sure that the creatures don't simply move through the network of passages and come back to surround them. If that happens, the heroes may be able to make a stand in the partially-mined area in the northwest part of the tunnels.

RAT SWARM

CR 2

XP 600

Hit Points 16 (3d8+3)

Initiative +6

Speed 15 ft., climb 15 ft., swim 15 ft.

Senses low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +8

DEFENSE

Armor Class 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

Fortitude Save +4, **Reflex Save** +5, **Will Save** +2

Defensive Abilities swarm traits

OFFENSE

Melee swarm (1d6 plus sickness)

Special Attacks sickness, distraction (DC 12)

STATISTICS

STR –4, **DEX** +2, **CON** +1, **INT** –4, **WIS** +1, **CHA** –4

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Climb +10, Perception +8, Stealth +14, Swim +10

SPECIAL ABILITY

Distraction When a rat swarm deals damage to a living creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 13 Fortitude save or become nauseated for 1 round.

Sickness Sickness Whenever a creature takes damage from a rat swarm, that creature must make a DC 11 Fortitude save or become sickened. Each day after the first, the creature can attempt another DC 11 Fortitude save to remove this condition. Sickened creatures take a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks.

Swarm A rat swarm is made up of thousands of very small rodents. Swarms are immune to critical hits and take only half damage from slashing and piercing weapons. Reducing a swarm to 0 hit points or less causes it to break up; a swarm can never be staggered or dying. Swarms are immune to

spells that target one or more specific individuals, but take half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, like the *burning hands* spell. Swarms deal automatic damage to any creature whose space they occupy at the end of their move with no attack roll needed.

6C. BLUE CHEESE CAVERNS (CR 5; XP 1,600)

A mutated patch of dangerous mold has taken over this cave, but braving the danger could yield great rewards.

The air becomes heavier with moisture as the tunnel slopes down toward another section of the cave. The cave walls in this area are white and very wet. Large patches of blue and green mold grow in the clearing on the white cave floor, reminding you of a large piece of blue cheese. You see several gems in a variety of



types high along the walls, as if someone has placed them there.

Hazard: The blue and green mold is harmless, but PCs succeeding on a DC 14 **Perception** check notice smaller sections of brown and orange mold growing around or very near each gem. A successful **Knowledge (dungeoneering)** DC 12 check reveals that the mold is russet mold. Russet mold can be very dangerous, but fortunately this strain is weaker than the typical mold. PCs that recognize the threat can place wet rags over their mouths, granting them a +2 circumstance bonus on any Fortitude saves against the mold.

WEAKENED RUSSET MOLD

CR 4

XP 1,200

When a creature approaches within 5 feet of a patch of this mold, the fungus releases a cloud of spores in a 5-foot radius burst. Everyone in the area must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or the spores quickly take root in their victims, inflicting 1 point of Constitution damage per round and causing a bright, red rash on any exposed skin. A new Fortitude save can be attempted each round to halt the growth. Although immunity to disease won't protect against russet mold spores, the growth can be halted by a *remove disease* spell or similar effects. Exposure to sunlight also halts the spores' growth. Plants are immune to russet mold spores.

Vegepygmies are not created from those who die from this weakened mold's effects.

A patch of russet mold is unharmed by all effects save for acid, alcohol, or *remove disease* (or a similar magical effect, such as *heal*), all of which can kill a single patch of russet mold on contact. Sunlight doesn't kill the mold, but does render it dormant and harmless as long as the sunlight persists.

Creatures: Two thin, three-foot tall creatures appear to be guarding the area with longspear. They are gangly and covered in the orange mold, which they wear like mossy coats. A successful DC 12 **Knowledge (dungeoneering)** check reveals that these are vegepygmies, creatures related to the russet mold that grows here. The

vegepygmies attack the PCs to defend the mold and the gems.

Treasure: If the PCs destroy the vegepygmies and resist the mold, they can safely remove about 500 gold pieces' worth of gems, including amethyst, peridot, and garnet.

VEGEPYGMY (2)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

Hit Points 5 (1d8+1) each

Initiative +2

Speed 30 ft.

Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +7

DEFENSE

Armor Class 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +3 natural, +1 size)

Fortitude Save +3, Reflex Save +2, Will Save +0

Immune electricity, paralysis, poison, polymorph, sleep, and stun

DR 5/slashing or bludgeoning

OFFENSE

Melee 2 claws +1 (1d4) or longspear +1 (1d6)

STATISTICS

STR +0, DEX +2, CON +1, INT -1, WIS +0, CHA +0

Feats Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Perception +7, Stealth +10 (+18 in vegetation);

Racial Modifiers +4 Stealth (+12 in vegetation)

Languages Undercommon, Vegepygmy (cannot speak)

ITEMS

Equipment longspear

Development: The presence of vegepygmies in the tunnels is a mystery. Guy never encountered them before. He suspects they were either spawned by the mold, somehow, or found their way here via hidden tunnels known only to them. A thorough search reveals no such tunnels at this time, but curious heroes may wish to explore the caves further after the problems in Bakewell Tart have been resolved. They may be able to find a previously unknown entrance to Kimmeros, the dark underworld that lies far beneath the surface world.

PART IV: STICKY SAP

7. THE WILLOW—THE MONKEY CHASED THE WEASEL (CR 2; XP 600)

A giant willow tree stands near a marshy area with large cattails and tall grass at the edge of Sapphire Lake. The ground is soggy and swampy near the tree, but its roots provide some dry patches and stability. A field extends north from the tall grasses to the bushes along the path east. Flowers in the meadow attract bees and butterflies, as do the flowers of the late-blooming willow, itself. The willow tree hangs gingerly over the lake. Many branches with their long trills sweep across the water's surface. A sleek, furry animal is running in circles around the tree.

There are some valuable materials the PCs can get from the willow tree. The tree can provide willow switches, bark, and roots. It also holds a beehive that can provide honey. Unfortunately, the small animal in residence presents an obstacle.

Creature: A young dire weasel guards this tree and harasses anyone who comes into the area. As soon as the PCs try to defend themselves or fight the weasel, it turns and takes off running around the willow tree, through the field, along the water's edge, and into the lake. When the PCs turn back toward the tree, he harasses them again. The PCs must chase the weasel and catch him to get him to stop his troublesome play.

Use the **PURSUIT DECK** (see the back of this book) to create a chase scene. Have each PC use a miniature or other unique marker to show what card their character is on and use one for the weasel. Shuffle the cards and randomly choose six cards to place in a circle. Next, place all the PC markers on one card; this is the start. The weasel has a head start so place him 3 cards in

NEW WEAPON

LIGHT MELEE WEAPONS	COST	DMG (S)	DMG (M)	CRITICAL	RANGE	WEIGHT	TYPE	SPECIAL
willow switch	—	1	1d2	x2	—	1/2 lb.	S	nonlethal

front of the PCs (the chase goes clockwise). Roll for initiative then play in order. Each PC and the weasel must choose one of the skill checks or spell on each card in the **PURSUIT DECK**. They must succeed the check or cast the spell in order to move their marker to the next card. If they fail the check, they stay on the current card. It is possible that the weasel runs so fast that he laps the PCs and thus gets himself caught. If the PCs catch up to the card the weasel is on, they also capture him. Once captured, the PCs do not need to attack him. If the PCs succeed on an **Intimidate** check DC 16, they can scare him away from the area permanently. If they succeed on a **Handle Animal** or **Diplomacy** check (DC 20), they can befriend him. He will

follow the group and help out for a while, until he gets a bit older and has to return to the wild. How long he stays with the party is up to the GM.

YOUNG DIRE WEASEL

CR 2

XP 400 (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 4*)

Hit Points 22

Initiative +5

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +11

DEFENSE

Armor Class 18, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+5 Dex, +3 natural)

Fortitude Save +4, Reflex Save +9, Will Save +2

OFFENSE

Melee bite +7 (1d6+4 plus grab)

Special Attacks blood rage, grab

ALL AROUND THE BIG WILLOW TREE, THE MONKEY CHASED THE WEASEL.
THE MONKEY SAID T'WAS ALL IN FUN. POP, GOES THE WEASEL!



STATISTICS

STR +3, **DEX** +5, **CON** +0, **INT** -4, **WIS** +1, **CHA** +0

Feats Combat Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception),
Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Climb +7, Perception +11, Stealth +16, Swim +9

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blood Rage When the weasel takes damage in combat, on its next turn it can fly into a rage as a free action. When raging it gains 5 hit points and a +1 bonus to attack and damage rolls, Fortitude saves, and Strength-based skill checks, but it takes a -2 penalty to its AC. The rage lasts as long as the battle or 1 minute, whichever is shorter. It cannot end its rage voluntarily.

Grab A target struck by the weasel's bite attack is grappled (or grabbed). The target can't move from its current square on its next turn, loses its DEX mod to AC, and takes a -2 penalty on attack rolls. The weasel cannot grab more than one creature at a time. When it grabs a creature, it can only make attacks against that creature.

Development: Once the weasel is no longer a threat, the PCs can collect willow switches, bark, roots, and willow sap. The PCs may also collect honey from the beehive after succeeding on a DC 20 **Survival** check.



PART V: BAKEWELL TART

At long last, the PCs arrive in the town of Bakewell Tart. It is possible the PCs have bypassed some of the encounters along the way to town, and even if they encountered all of the challenges along the way, they probably won't know the full extent of the town's troubles until they get there.

The road opens into the main square. A crossroads running east and west divides the town into four sections with a building at each end of the crossroad. Small wooden signs hang outside each location, identifying the business within. Each local business has either a small house in back or a loft above for the owners and workers. Small gardens accompany almost all the buildings in the back. Hearty vegetables such as cabbage, carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, rutabaga, and parsnips are most prevalent. The air smells of wondrous meats and stews, smoke and wood, candied nuts and spices. Just entering the town makes your stomach rumble and your taste buds water.

Bakewell Tart presents plenty of opportunities to gather information about what troubles the townsfolk. Each of those troubles presents the opportunity for a small quest. The players should take the opportunity to roleplay each conversation, but those who wish to move along quickly can attempt a **Diplomacy** check (DC 10) for each NPC.

If the text of an encounter does not specify what the townsfolk know, then default to the following information:

- The Chocolate Mountain pass road is too treacherous to use, lately, even for adventurers.
- The cats have all vanished without a trace. Many of the townsfolk are saddened by the disappearance of a beloved pet.



- **DIRA** is new in town. She took over running the Chocolate Fountain Eatery, but no one thinks she will stay long. She's not very friendly, serves horrible food, and doesn't even take care of her place.
- Times are hard and everyone is having some sort of problem, sadly.

8A. BLUEBERRY BLACKSMITHING AND WEAPONS

A slanted structure with wide openings in three walls rests near the main intersection in town. A large iron hammer, used for pounding swords and other weapons, rests across the doorway leading into the shop. The building boasts two large furnaces, one of

which blazes with red heat. A dwarf with a black apron stands before it, heating a chunk of metal in the embers.

The dwarf has a full beard that is chestnut in color. His bushy eyebrows, sideburns, and beard cover most of his face leaving only the small tip of his nose and his twinkling eyes exposed.

He calls over his shoulder without turning. "What has the cat dragged in?"

This is the dwarf smith, **MELN BRIGHTHAND** (male dwarf expert 4). If the PCs question him or succeed on their **Diplomacy** check, they learn the following:

"A few nights past, a strange sound was coming from the school house. It sounded as if hundreds of cats

were purring and meowing. A few of the younglings in town went to check it out but found nothing at the schoolhouse. No cats, nothing. However, since then neither a single cat nor cat hair has been found in town. The jailer is furious as his favorite feline was among the missing. He'll pay a pretty penny for capturing the thief. Meanwhile, everyone in town is at each other's throats. No one trusts anyone."

Meln informs the PCs that the townspeople poked around the town for days and could find no trace of cats nor the culprit responsible for taking them. If asked, he says the schoolhouse might provide more clues or suggests that the PCs talk to the town sheriff, Jake, at the jail.

PCs may purchase or sell weapons at the smithy using the prices from the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*. Meln has no master work items for sale, currently, but can make one, given time.

8B. JELLY JAIL (XP 400)

Jelly Jail Jake sits out front on a wooden porch swing, chewing on a long piece of wheat. A bright gold star shines on his leather vest with a crossbow on his hip. The wooden porch is placed in front of a squarish building with a few, small windows with iron bars. The jail has saloon-style swinging doors, leading into a small front office.

"You must be the backup I requested from Solaerin. Good thing you are here, too. We have all types of troubles from folks who won't stop crying, to thievery, to missing cats. Come on in, and I'll give you the details." Jelly Jail Jake rises from his seat and goes inside.

Inside, you see that the building has a small, inner courtyard paved with red brick, surrounded by ten cells, each fitted with a heavy, iron-bound door. The doors are all open, indicating that every cell is currently empty.

Jelly Jail Jake ruffles through the few scraps on his desks and then hands you several pieces of parchment. "Here are the reports I've collected about the townsfolks' problems."

Sheriff Jake, also known as **JELLY JAIL JAKE** (male human warrior 3) is a slightly rotund, jolly-looking figure. He takes his duties as town sheriff seriously, but he didn't expect to have to do anything like investigative work and has only managed to take a few notes about the strange occurrences. The parchment pieces he gives the PCs provide only the briefest indication of what's going on. The PCs will have to explore the town and talk to the locals to learn more.

- **LAYNA** at the pub. Someone's stealing her onions.
- **CAIN** the carpenter. Can't get willow root.
- **JAVA** the cobbler. Missing a shipment of berries.
- **BROTHER BUCK** at church. Parishioners can't get through the pass to attend services.
- School children claim there are goblins at the lake bothering people.
- **BREE** the baker. Can't make maple syrup.
- **SMOKE** at the potions shop. Needs something from the old willow tree.

Development: If the PCs bring the cats back to town, but do not turn the thief over to the sheriff, he offers them only half of the original reward. The PCs must succeed on a **Diplomacy** (DC 18) check in order receive the full amount of the gold. Reward the PCs with 400 XP if they at least bring back the cats.

8C. CHILI CHURCH (XP 50 PER PC)

At the eastern end of town, an impressive red brick church looms above the city. At daybreak, the church's shadow engulfs the entire town. In the back lies a quiet, fenced graveyard.

Inside the church, wooden pews face a raised stage with expensive candlesticks positioned on either side of a small altar. The building's beautiful stained glass windows depict some of the great stories of the land and include fairies, dragons, merfolk, fauns, and unicorns.

A tall slender elf with pale skin and dressed in purple robes stands at the altar, quietly reading a giant book. When he hears you enter, he looks up from his reading, "Please come in travelers, and tell me of your journey. It is a slow day for our parish and my feet are tired."

The local minister, **BROTHER BUCK** (male human cleric 2), walks down to the first row of pews and motions for the PCs to join him. Brother Buck is a follower of Jozen, Aeva's god of home and hearth. He is a kind and patient individual. He listens intently to any stories the PCs choose to tell.

Encourage each of the players to actually tell a short story of their choice. Each PC who tells a story receives 50 XP. Once the PCs have regaled him with their stories of adventuring, he asks a favor of them.

"You sound like mighty adventures. Your skills are varied and fierce. That is just the sort of thing we need! Might I ask of you a favor? It is indeed a momentous one, and thus the church will reward you well. I have permission to offer one thousand gold pieces to the heroes who can deal with this problem!"

"You see, there is a mountain troll blocking the mountain pass. Many of our patrons live on the other side of the mountain. They have not been able to attend services in at least a fortnight. The troll is much too powerful for them to fight head on. A few folk have managed to sneak past him, however. Those who have say he has a wizard or demon that has convinced him to block the pass."

I know a way to sneak past him so that you can investigate the Chocolate Mountains and perhaps

find the demon who commands him. If you can find the source then perhaps you can convince him to leave and clear our pass once more. If you are interested in such a task, I will tell you more. Nevertheless, I caution you to decide carefully, for this is a dangerous task."

If the PCs accept the quest, Brother Buck explains that the potion shop will provide each PC with one *potion of invisibility* if they tell Smoke they are working for Brother Buck. The troll will still be able to smell and hear them, but at least he won't be able to see them. Brother Buck suggests that the PCs might gather the berries that grow along the road through the pass. Smearing the berries onto their clothes and bodies might hide their smell. The PCs must still remain as quiet as possible when sneaking past or spying on the troll, but the precautions can certainly help.

Lastly, Brother Buck informs the PCs that the troll has forged an alliance with two companions, a mountain aurochs (cattle) and a mountain lion. They roam the mountains and try to drive out any who manage to sneak past the troll. Those animals must also be dealt with. They are not very intelligent, but very powerful in their own right.

Brother Buck also says that those who managed to sneak up there and back say the troll meets at sunset each day with a demon or wizard just past the mouth of the pass. He has no way to tell if the reports are true, but he does know that the PCs need to get past the troll and up into the mountains to dispose of the lion and cow.

Development: Encourage the PCs to visit all the other areas of the town and to finish the other quests before going to the troll.

Treasure: Once the PCs finish this task they may return here to receive their 1,000 gold pieces.

8D. THE SPICE AND POTIONS SHOP (XP 200)

The hand-carved, wooden sign outside this small shop is slightly charred as though it has been burned. The dome-shaped building has a round door that is only about four feet tall, with a small glass peephole in the top middle. Round glass windows adorn the dome's walls. The top of the dome has several small chimney pipes poking upwards. Strange, colored smoke billows from each of them. Some of the pipes dispense puffy, purple and pink smoke while another pipe has blue and green thin, swirly, wispy smoke. A small bear statue next to the door holds a sign that reads "Welcome. Please Enter."

Inside the shop, the curved walls are lined with thin shelves that rise to just beneath the glass windows, which bring in very little light. Small oil lamps set very dimly are scattered around the shop. The shelves hold hundreds of vials, bottles, bags, jars, bowls, and other small containers, many of which are labeled with names of spices. The scents of cloves, pepper, fenugreek, oregano, cinnamon, and nutmeg fill the air. Many bowls and jars contain other strange, unidentified objects. At the back of the shop sits a locked glass cabinet with glowing vials and flasks of all colors.

A gnome, obviously the town alchemist, stands mixing liquids at a round table in the middle of the room. She has bright, lime green hair and wears a fuchsia robe and enormously thick spectacles. She looks up through a glass beaker over an open flame.

"Oh, new travelers, huh? I hope you aren't like the last customers whose sticky fingers managed to lift some of my shop contents without paying. Now that you've been warned, how may I help you?"

The shopkeep named **SMOKE** (female gnome alchemist 4) is a bit odd, but can sell all manner of potions to customers able to afford them. She informs the PCs who succeed on a DC 10 **Diplomacy** check or roleplay that there has



recently been an increase in the number of villagers coming in with skin issues. Smoke suspects some kind of underground fungus or mold is to blame. She suggests checking out the nearby caves, as they are the most likely place for locals to be going underground.

Smoke expands on her comment about someone stealing from her, as well. She thinks it is ironic that the recently stolen items from

her shop were all items that she cannot get now because strange happenings prevent her from collecting the items she needs. She is willing to pay the PCs to help her find the items:

- The bark and sap from a willow tree: 175 gold pieces for five pounds of each. (See the **THE WILLOW—THE MONKEY CHASED THE WEASEL** encounter on page 19.)
- Up to 25 mushrooms: 5 gold pieces each. (See the **TOADSTOOL RING** encounter on page 8.)

Development: If they have spoken to Brother Buck and tell Smoke of their mission to get rid of the troll, she gives each PC a *potion of invisibility* to sneak past the troll, noting, of course, that this is at the church's expense. Award the PCs with 100 XP for bringing Smoke mushrooms and another 100 XP for bringing her sap and bark.

8E. BREE'S BREAD AND BAKERY (XP 50 PER PC)

The PCs can smell the bakery before they even get close, and the smell pulls them closer. If the PCs get within 10 feet of the building, they cannot help but enter unless they overcome a DC 22 on a **Will** save. The baker, **BREE** (female human expert 5), is bubbly, happy, and more than willing to share a bite of her baked goods.

The smell of baking bread mixed with the sweetness of cinnamon, sugar, and chocolate fills your senses as you approach this quaint and welcoming shop. As the doors open, your thoughts are filled with caramelizing sugars, rising yeast rolls, and warm bread. The air in here is warm and slightly humid.

A tall, plump woman with a welcoming smile and a pretty face is wearing a white apron busily and tending to multiple ovens. "Come in, come in! I am just taking out the honey Verdant rolls. You can have the first taste!"

Bree offers the PCs samples of donuts, bear claws, cinnamon buns, coffee cake, cupcakes, raisin nut bread, and chocolate cakes. If the PCs take a bite of anything, they must succeed a **Will** save DC 18 to avoid purchasing a whole dozen of that item for one silver piece.

After they have spent a few moments sampling, eating, and paying for food, the PCs can ask Bree questions about the town. If they succeed on their **Diplomacy** check, Bree tells the PCs that she hasn't been able to make any good maple syrup, because a dangerous boar is scaring people out of the maple grove. She asks the PCs if they will collect the sap for her, and perhaps deal with the boar permanently, so she can make maple syrup, since the boar has been keeping everyone from the area.

Development: If the PCs cannot pay for the goods they eat, they must agree to bring her the sap for free. Otherwise, she notifies Jelly Jail Jake who takes them to jail for failure to pay.

If they do not owe Bree anything for the baked goods, she pays them five gold pieces for each one-pound bucket of sap they deliver. When the PCs return with the maple syrup, they must succeed on a DC 18 **Will** save to avoid tasting any new items fresh out of the oven. Reward the PCs 50 XP each when they complete this quest.

8F. ICEBERG INN AND PUB (XP 200)

Bakewell Tart's only public house also serves as its single inn. Chances are, this is where the PCs will stay for at least one night.

The inn is a large building with white stucco walls, dark wooden beams, and a heavy thatched roof. A fancy carved sign hangs near the front door, identifying the place as the Iceberg Inn and Pub. Chopped logs for the cooking fires and the hearth in the common room are stacked along the side of the building.

Inside, several small, round tables are scattered about the room. A few of the townspeople are seated here, enjoying a meal or a drink and listening to a local musician play a harp sitting along the east wall. There is a small stage against the southern wall and a large chest next to it contains supplies for skits, plays, and comedy performances, which the inn hosts on a nightly basis.

A wooden stairway on the south wall just next to the front doorway heads up to the rooms that open onto a balcony that goes completely around the pub. Two rooms are on each wall and have two twin beds with straw mattresses with a small nightstand between them. An oil lamp adorns the nightstand and there is a chamber pot under each bed.

The bar on the western wall is made of heavy mahogany. A stout dwarf tends bar. He introduces himself as **KAIL** (male dwarf expert 2) and suggests the PCs try the spiced apple cider or the delicious hot chocolate.

A small swinging double door next to the bar leads back to the small kitchen. A quick glimpse inside as the door opens and closes reveals a grill, an oven, an icebox, and large butcher block in use as a work table. The inn usually offers a set menu for 1 to 5 silver pieces. Higher prices pay for better cuts of meat, larger portions or more expensive beverages. Every meal option includes a bowl of "Threllish Onion soup."

As they observe the activities in the pub, a frantic cook rushes in and out of the kitchen, occasionally digging through boxes of dry food, picking over trays of vegetables, and searching through the pantry.

If the PCs talk to the townspeople, they inform the PCs that **LAYNA** the cook (female human expert 3), makes the best Threllish Onion soup and usually serves it daily, but none of them have had any of the soup, lately.

A few of them have been waiting for a while. If they interrogate Kail, he offers them rooms and drinks but does not show them menus and is hesitant to offer food. He seems nervous when pressed about dining options. PCs succeeding a **Sense Motive** DC 14 check can determine that the inn does not have any of the popular soup.

When the PCs discover the problem, or when they seem to have fully explored the inn, they suddenly hear a loud crash in the kitchen. If the PCs check it out, they see the sobbing cook sitting on the floor. An overturned pot of broth is emptying the last of its contents onto the floor next to her. If the PCs question Layna, (**Diplomacy** DC 10 check or roleplay), she reveals that all her onions are gone.

My onions are missing! All of them! I had three dozen but now they are gone! I am positive a traveler took them yesterday on his way out of town. He had been snooping around the kitchen earlier, and I saw him packing similar looking crates in his horse carriage. I didn't say anything because I felt foolish accusing him. Now I wish I had, because I cannot possibly make Threllish Onion soup without them.

If the PCs have already met with the pseudodragon and obtained some onions and they offer them to her, Layna hugs them and is ecstatic. She offers the PCs all a free room, dinner, and drink for the night. She also offers them five gold pieces in credit at the hardware store.

If the PCs have not visited the garden, Layna asks the PCs to collect some onions from the pseudodragon's garden. If the PCs accept the quest, she gives them one cooked fish to offer to the pseudodragon. Reward PCs 200 XP for delivering the onions and appeasing Layna.

In her conversation with the PCs, Layna warns them that the Chocolate Fountain Eatery has horrible food and drink. She doesn't know how

that place can stay open and advises the PCs to save their time and money and avoid the place!

8G. HONEY HARDWARE AND EQUIPMENT STORE

The Honey Hardware and Equipment Store is one of the few places in town that isn't experiencing serious problems. Owned by **ALVIN** (male halfling expert 3), it's a good source of supplies, as well as a place to get a few things that can help the PCs in other parts of the town.

A musty smell lingers in the air of this simple shop. Rows of cluttered shelves fill the room. The store looks like a disorganized mess. A short, hairy halfling is bouncing about, on and off a stool, as he frantically puts items on the shelves. He calls out but does not stop moving.

"Hello! I'm Alvin. If you need anything let me know."

A buzzing sound is coming from the back of the shop.

If the PCs investigate the buzzing noise, they find a working hive on the outside of the shop wall, visible through a crude piece of glass. The attached glass hangs by hinges so the shopkeeper can open it to remove the honeycombs. Rough-barked planks make up the other walls of the hive and offer access spots to the outside. Worker bees crawl industrially over the combs, while others fly in and out of the openings. Succeeding on a DC 20 **Perception** check, the PCs can spot the queen bee surrounded by many of her bee servants. Next to the hive, the PCs find several large jars of honey for sale. One pound of honey sells for one gold piece.

The PCs may purchase all types of basic goods from the shop (such as shovels for two gold pieces or a hook for one copper piece). All items sold are at the prices set in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*.

A sign on the counter notifies guests that the shopkeeper buys quills for one silver piece each. If the PCs have a bundle of willow branches, the shopkeeper will purchase the branches for one gold piece to make brooms.

If the PCs question Alvin about the town's missing cats, he tells them: "I don't know much about any missing cats. I have heard a few of the townspeople complain about it though." If the PCs succeed on a DC 15 **Diplomacy** check, they can prompt Alvin to remember an important detail. "Come to think of it, a few weeks ago, a deep gnome came in one evening. He was in here looking for rat poison, but he said my small supply wasn't enough. He asked me what attracted cats and I told him they love catnip. He bought all the catnip I had. I was glad to sell it all before it went bad. I haven't seen him around since then."

8H. TANGERINE TAILOR AND COBBLER (XP 200)

Though the local tailor is called upon to make clothing for many folk in town, **JAVA** (female human wizard 3/expert 2) prefers crafting and selling boots, shoes, and other footwear, especially magical ones, if the magic is within her power.

This shop has wide panels in the front wall that can be pulled aside to give the place an airy feel and display the shop's wares. Curtains of all colors hang in the openings, framing racks of gorgeous outfits and dresses. Stands shaped like tiny staircases that display shoes in a variety of styles populate the shop, as well. A few tall racks support suits of fancy chainmail, leather, and plate mail armor.

PCs casting *detect magic* or succeeding on a DC 12 **Knowledge (arcane)** skill check discover that there are several pairs of magical shoes on sale, here. The shop has 2 pairs each of boots

of elvenkind, boots of levitation, boots of striding and springing, and boots of the winterlands, and a single pair of slippers of spider climbing. (The descriptions and costs of these items can be found in the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook*.) Each suit of armor has a +1 enhancement and is decorated in fancy designs. Java also has one *mithril shirt* to sell.

As the PCs are examining the shop's goods, the owner, Java, comes storming out of the back, muttering angrily and loudly to herself before she realizes the PCs are there.

A middle-aged woman comes bustling out of a back room. She roughly closes the door and carries a few bolts of cloth to a worktable. She is speaking just loud enough for you to hear her.

"That faun should have been here hours ago! That is what I get for trusting my business to a fey creature. If he is not here soon I will lose this huge order. Ugh, I should have known that he'd do everything in his own sweet time!"

As she finishes her sentence, she looks up suddenly to see that she has customers. She is visibly startled, but recovers quickly.

"Oh, forgive me. I didn't realize you were here. I am Java, the cobbler...and tailor. Can I help you?"

The PCs can talk to Java and learn that she arranged a deal with a faun from the Feyweald to bring her different ingredients for her magical boots. She has an order for a special pair of magical boots that must be dyed red by tomorrow or she will not be able to ship them to her buyer in time. The faun was to have delivered the berries yesterday so that Java could finish the job. Sadly, he never showed.

Development: Java asks the PCs to intervene and either find the faun or gather the berries. She believes the berries she needs grow near the crossroads, north of the city, as well as along the mountain pass. Since she is in dire need, she

gives the PCs 4 empty bags and offers the PCs 15 gold pieces for each full bag they bring her.

8I. CHOCOLATE FOUNTAIN EATERY

Of all the places in Bakewell Tart, the Chocolate Fountain is by far the worst for wear. The building is poorly maintained and seems as though it might fall apart before long. As the PCs investigate, they may learn more about the true source of the town's troubles.

Even from a distance, the Chocolate Fountain Eatery appears run down. The thatched roof has been hastily patched with mud and sticks barely sufficient to prevent leaks. The tables inside and out are all mismatched and rickety and the floors don't look like they've been swept in weeks.

You see very few patrons, and fewer are drinking the establishment's signature beverage, hot chocolate. From the few who have ordered it, you can see that their drinks are plain and boring—no cherry, no sprinkles, not even tiny dollop of whipped cream. A cracked menu board on the wall offers more choices than the ones at the Iceberg Inn, but the choices are not very appetizing: broccoli and split pea soup, okra quiche, catfish stew, liver and onions, ground steak and spinach, and fruitcake flan.

In contrast to the restaurant's appearance, an extremely well-dress elven woman stands behind the counter. Her dress is made of purple velvet, and gold rings adorn most of her fingers. She has long brown hair with a braid on either side of her head, each tucked behind one ear. Her eyes are a brilliant green. They seem to bore right into you when she glares in your direction.

PCs succeeding on a DC 21 **Sense Motive** check can determine that **DIRA** is not interested in running a restaurant. In fact, she tries to run customers out of her pub by offering unappetizing meals and watered down drinks. She seems annoyed by the PCs' presence and says

HIDDEN FOE

Dira should not be too aggressive, as you do not want the PCs to attack her yet. She mostly wants to anger them a bit so they will leave. Worst case is she kicks them out of her shop. The Eatery serves as a cover for her to stay in town while she works her mischief in the mountains and surrounding area. If for some reason they attack now, she uses her *invisibility* to disappear out the back. Once the PCs have visited the troll, they can come back here to confront her.

she doesn't know anything about the problems other townsfolk are having. She insists that she is very busy and cannot be bothered with their petty difficulties.

In truth, "Dira" is really Yaldira, a cruel forlarren woman who once tried to enslave all of the Feyweald in service to a terrible witch queen from another realm. Thwarted in those plans, Yaldira intends to sabotage King Ambrose I's efforts to forge peace with Queen Pryozha and her subjects. During the conversation, have the PCs attempt another **Sense Motive** check against either Yaldira's **Bluff** skill roll or a fixed DC 22. Any PCs who fought against Yaldira in the Feyweald (in a previous adventure) gain a +2 bonus to their **Sense Motive** rolls.

PCs who succeed on the **Sense Motive** roll can recognize her. However, remind the players how skilled she is at escaping capture. Encourage them to spend time building up more knowledge of what is happening in town before they face her directly.

If the PCs make inquiries about the mountain pass, she attempts to throw them off by claiming it is probably just some bandits or similarly mundane mischief. If the PCs persist, she eventually gets angry about it and tells the PCs to leave the pass well enough alone if they know what is good for them. She then demands that

they either purchase something or leave, as she does not allow solicitors in her establishment and does not want to have to contact Jelly Jail Jake.

8J. CHEESEWHEEL SCHOOL HOUSE (XP 200)

The local school provides education to a few children from the town and surrounding area. If the PCs visit during the day, dwarf, human, and halfling children are outside playing at recess. If the PCs arrive in the evening, all the doors and shutters are locked.

The road on the west side of town dead ends at a red brick schoolhouse. A small bell tower sits in the middle of the roof, white wooden shutters concealing the school bell. Inside the schoolhouse are rows of wooden desks built onto the chair. Each desk has an opening on the left with the desktop wrapping around on the right side of the chair. A giant blackboard lines the back wall of the schoolhouse. The teacher's desk is to the right of the board.

A short human woman dressed in plain clothes sits at the desk, writing something in a large book.

If the PCs question the teacher, she tells them that her name is **SUZANNE** (female human expert 5) and then informs them that she does not know anything about the cats or any other troubles. She is very busy planning lessons for the school children. However, she suggests the PCs speak to the groundskeeper who is around back tending to the garden and might have seen something.

If the PCs speak to the school children, they only have a few minutes before the bell rings. Each PC may ask one question. Roll percentile dice, then consult the table below to determine what the PCs hear.

RUMOR TABLE

D100 ROLL	RUMOR
01–10	I had a cat named Felix, but I can't find him. I love my cat; I miss him terribly. I have looked everywhere for him. I found a bunch of cat hairs here behind the schoolhouse, along with a small torn bag of catnip! I told the groundskeeper to keep an eye out for him. I hope he returns soon!
11–20	Do not go to the lake because there are goblins there! At first, they just want to skip rocks but if you do not let them win, they try to attack you. Those goblins keep us from swimming and fishing there, too, and I hate that. That spot has the best fish!
21–30	I heard there is a pig rooting up the southern trail by the maples. My folks won't let me go collect pebbles or leaves there anymore.
31–40	The last time I went to gather mushrooms along the southern part of the lake, I heard wailing and crying down there. It was scary, so I ran away.
41–50	Something strange lives around the old willow tree. When we went down there to swing on the branches, it tried attacking us. We didn't stick around to see what it was!
51–60	A bald, gray-skinned gnome came into town a while ago and said he had found rubies in a nearby cave. No one believed him and he hasn't brought any here to sell. I heard him say he can't get the rubies because of a bunch of little monsters living in the caves.
61–70	My father said he couldn't get a good bowl of onion soup at the pub, last night. The cook should talk to the little dragon at the garden on the edge of town. He has onions. I went there once with my folks to get leeks.
71–80	There's a funny man with horns on the north road. We went up there to pick berries, but he wouldn't let us. He just wanted to sing and dance.
81–90	Look what my brother made for me! A brand new quill pen! He said he found the feather over by the lake.
91–100	Do not go through the mountain pass! My mom says a mighty troll and his goons are blocking it. She says there is no way to defeat the troll and that he eats children! I heard Smoke the alchemist say that she could get by him easily with a single eyelash in acacia gum. I don't know what she was talking about.

If the PCs go to the back of the school, they find **ROQUEFORT** the groundskeeper tending a large garden.

You find a large plot of land with rows of flowers alternating with fruit and vegetable plants. The garden is meticulously clear of weeds. All the plants are well pruned, with vines growing beautifully along trellises and other plants resting comfortably in carefully made beds.

Bright red strawberries catch the eye as do the cherry tomatoes and purple eggplant. Several green vegetables grow in various stages. Small fruit and nut trees grow along the outer edge of the garden. Butterflies and bees hover around the plants, gathering nectar and spreading pollen.

A tall human man dressed in overalls and a cotton shirt with a large hat is busily turning melons on the ground to keep one side from yellowing. His hands and face are dirty and worn from years and hard work, but there is pleasant gleam in his eyes.

Roquefort (male human expert 4) is happy to talk to the PCs, but he speaks only in riddles, something the teacher neglects to warn the PCs about. When the PCs ask about the missing cats he offers the following riddles. The PCs may also succeed on various skill checks to decipher each riddle **Knowledge (local)** (DC 17), **Knowledge (history)** (DC 15), **Knowledge (geography)** (DC 13), or **Linguist** (DC 13).

Stealthy as a shadow in the dead of night.

Cunning and affectionate, even though I bite.

Curiosity is my mortal enemy,

But I am too swift for death to catch me.

What am I?

—A CAT

I have a mouth but have no tongue

I'm full of air though I have no lungs

I'm significant although I'm hollow

I have a neck yet cannot swallow
What am I?

—A CAVE

Small wise beings are better than small fools
Especially when they are so good with tools
The fey be gone, yet the powers stay
Beware of their tricks and outrageous play
Who am I?

—A GNOME

Deep, dark, underground,
This is where I'll be found.
Yet when I see the light of day,
I reflect the sun every which way.
Cut me quick and I improve,
A gift of nobility to behoove.
What am I?

—A GEM

Development: If the PCs gather enough information to guess that a gnome stole the cats and took them to a cave to gather gems the groundskeeper nods his head frantically. He points in the direction of the cave and smiles widely. Award the PCs 200 XP.

8K. CHESTNUT CARPENTERS (XP 200)

The local carpenter, **CAINE STRONGARC**, works out of a large, open-ended building between the schoolhouse and the covered market area. He, too, needs some help from the PCs.

In the front of this large workshop are a few stained and finished pieces for sale. These masterful pieces of work have unique touches to the carved designs. Upon closer inspection, you realize that they are inlaid pieces of a different kind of wood.

Sawdust hangs in the air and tickles your nose as soon as the door to the workshop opens. Cut strips of wood are stacked in piles on either side of the large room. Several half-finished pieces of furniture and other projects are scattered about on workbenches

and shelves. A dwarf in large, protective spectacles chops wood in the back of the shop. He sets down his axe when he sees you.

"What do you want?" he gruffly asks. He stomps over to the tool bench and drops his axe. "These pieces aren't ready for sale. Without willow roots I can't add my finishing touches. Unless you just want firewood, you'll have to come back when I can get more."

Questioning Caine reveals that he has stalled on finishing his woodworking. He uses roots of the willow tree to add unique carved finishing touches; without them, he cannot consider a single project finished and refuses to sell them. One long section of root can finish several projects he has in the works.

Cain complains about an aggressive weasel that harasses anyone who gets too close to the tree. The weasel is too fast to be beaten, but makes it impossible to dig out even one root. Caine therefore, has given up.

Treasure: If the PCs chase the weasel away and bring one long root from the willow tree, he rewards them with 150 gold pieces. The PCs need a shovel and can get one at the hardware store. Award the PCs with 200 XP for helping the carpenter.

8L. APPLE MARKET

The town's market area is covered to keep out the sun and rain, usually making for a pleasant shopping experience.

A hay roof covers an open pavilion. Underneath, boxes filled with fruits and vegetables overflow. Along the back wall are stacks of cheese wheels. The rear of the market opens into a wide field that bumps against the road leading south, out of town. Cows and chickens roam freely in a nearby field. In one section of the field, corn and potatoes grow in rows. Other fruits and vegetables are in different stages

of growth. A halfling family tends to the plants and animals outside.

An older male halfling wearing a white apron is plucking the feathers from chickens and hanging them up for people to buy when he sees you. “Why hello, travelers? Did you come up from the south?”

The man introduces himself as **KALMAR**, the market’s proprietor and town butcher (male halfling expert 4). Further conversation with him reveals he has heard of a large boar causing trouble to the south. Aside from helping rid the town of a nuisance, Kalmar wants the meat to sell. If the PCs have already slain the boar, they may return to retrieve the carcass. Kalmar will pay 50 gold pieces for the meat.

PART VI: FORK FOR THE CHOCOLATE FOUNTAIN

9. THE FAUN AT THE FORK (CR 3 OR CR 6; XP 2,400)

The pathway that heads north from the town comes to a fork in the road. Beyond the road to the north, tall grass grows all in a wide field with taller tufts of blue grass scattered around.

The path to the west rises slightly, heading upward and to the northwest. In the distance, mountaintops peak above the tree line.

A sign pointing west reads, “Chocolate Mountain”, but a piece of parchment with the words “Do Not Enter! TROLL!” scrawled in large letters has been nailed to it. This is clearly the starting path to the mountain trail.

Bushes line both sides of the trail to the east. On the other side of the fork in the road are open grasslands.

A second sign pointing east indicates that the path leads to the Feyweald peninsula and the Verdant Court. Looking in that direction, you notice a young man with ram’s horns growing out of his forehead



and with legs resembling the lower half of a goat. The faun picks berries from the bushes while two sprites dance around him.

“Good day travelers. It is a beautiful day to be outside, enjoying the wonderful weather. Please join me for song, dance, and games. I just ask that you leave my berries alone.”

The faun’s name is **BILBREY**, and he is the same fey creature who has promised to deliver the berries to Java the tailor, in town. If the PCs have visited Java and inquire about the faun’s commitment to her, he responds with, “I’ll get to her, when I get to her. These berries are so delicious; they should not be wasted on dye for some foppish lord’s shoes. Besides while the

sun shines and the wind blows, we must be merry and play. Join me!"

If the PCs attempt to pick any berries, the faun and sprites attack, calling forth a sprite swarm. They may choose, however, to convince the faun of his commitment and avoid the physical combat. The PCs can do this via roleplay and success on a DC 20 **Diplomacy** check or by using the social combat rules presented below.

Whether the PCs overcome the faun with martial or social skill, award them the full XP as though they had defeated all of the creatures they could have faced.

SOCIAL COMBAT

Set up a 4x4 grid of cards from the **SOCIAL BATTLE DECK** to begin social combat, placing the card face down. (Use a 5x5 grid if you wish the encounter to be a bit more difficult.) Each player starts by rolling a d20 and adding their PC's Charisma modifier to determine their social influence. The players take turns in order of highest to lowest social influence. The first player turns over the bottom left or right corner card (their choice) and can attempt the challenge on that card.

The player choosing the card determines which one or two of the three skill checks they want to attempt. If they succeed on one of these checks, the player turns over a card adjacent to the first card (not diagonal). If they succeed on two of the three checks, they can reveal a diagonal card. The goal is to start at one corner of the grid and reach the opposite corner. In

other words, if starting at bottom right card, reveal cards until the top left is revealed or vice versa.

If the player fails on all three checks on a card, the player with the next highest social influence can attempt the challenges on that same card and continue. Once all of the players have made their attempts, the round of social combat ends. If they have not reached the opposite corner of the board, their argument fails to convince the faun to let them collect berries. If they succeed, the faun agrees that he should have kept his promise and all the fey creatures leave the area, allowing the PCs to pick berries, which they can take to Java.



FAUN

CR 1

XP 400 (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary* 3)

Hit Points 13

Initiative +3

Speed 30 ft.

Senses low-light vision; **Perception** +8

DEFENSE

Armor Class 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13

Fortitude Save +2, **Reflex Save** +6, **Will Save** +5

DR 2/cold iron

OFFENSE

Melee dagger +4 (1d4+2/19–20)

Range short bow +4 (1d6/x3)

Special Attacks panpipes

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +6)

At will—ghost sound (DC 13)

1/day—hideous laughter (DC 14), sleep (DC 14)

STATISTICS

STR +2, **DEX** +3, **CON** +1, **INT** +0, **WIS** +2, **CHA** +3

Feats Point-Blank Shot, Weapon Finesse
Skills Acrobatics +8, Bluff +9, Perception +8, Perform (wind) +9, Sense Motive +7, Stealth +9, Survival +4
Languages Common, Sylvan

ITEMS

Equipment dagger, short bow with 20 arrows, masterwork panpipes

Treasure 1 large emerald worth 400 gold pieces

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Panpipes Three times per day, a faun can use its masterwork pipes to augment its spell-like abilities. As a swift action, it can increase the DC of the next spell-like ability it uses on its turn by +2.

SPRITE (2)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary* 3)

Hit Points 3

Initiative +3

Speed 15 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect)

Senses *detect evil*, *detect good*, low-light vision;
Perception +6

DEFENSE

Armor Class 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14

Fortitude Save +0, **Reflex Save** +5, **Will Save** +2

DR 2/cold iron

OFFENSE

Melee shortsword +0 (1d2-4/19-20)

Ranged shortbow +7 (1d2-4)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +5)

Constant—*detect evil*, *detect good*

At will—*dancing lights*, *daze* (DC 10)

1/day—*color spray* (DC 11)

STATISTICS

STR -4, **DEX** +3, **CON** +0, **INT** -2, **WIS** +0, **CHA** +0

Feats Alertness

Skills Escape Artist +15, Fly +21, Perception +6, Sense Motive +2, Stealth +19

Languages Common, Sylvan

SQ luminous

ITEMS

Equipment arrows (20), shortbow, shortsword

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Luminous A sprite naturally sheds light equal to that of a torch. The sprite can control the color and intensity of the light as a swift action, reducing it to the dimness of a candle or even extinguishing it entirely if it wishes.

SPRITE SWARM

CR 5

XP 1,600^{FR}

Hit Points 45

Imitative +7

Speed 15 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect)

Senses *detect evil*, *detect good*, low-light vision;
Perception +14

DEFENSE

Armor Class 18, touch 18, flat-footed 14

Fortitude Save +4, **Reflex Save** +10, **Will Save** +7

Defensive Abilities swarm

DR 2/cold iron; **Immune** weapon damage

OFFENSE

Melee swarm (2d6 plus distraction)

Special Attacks angry glow, concentrated rush, distraction (DC 16)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +5)

Constant—*detect evil*, *detect good*

1/day—*mass daze* (DC 14)

STATISTICS

STR -4, **DEX** +3, **CON** +1, **INT** -3, **WIS** +0, **CHA** +0

Feats Alertness, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Fly +30, Intimidate +10, Perception +14, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +28

Languages Common, Sylvan

SQ mob mentality

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Angry Glow Once per minute, as a full-round action, the sprites that make up a sprite swarm may coordinate their luminous abilities to create a singular, searing glow. Creatures within 10 feet of a sprite swarm with line of sight must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or be blinded for 1d4 rounds. A creature that succeeds at its save is dazzled for 1 round.

Concentrated Rush Once every 1d4 rounds, if more than one creature occupies a sprite swarm's space, the swarm may use its attack action to concentrate on one of these creatures to deal 4d6 points of damage in place of its normal swarm damage. Other creatures within the swarm's space do not take swarm damage that round.

Distraction When a sprite swarm deals damage to a living creature, that creature must succeed on a DC 16 Fortitude save or become nauseated for 1 round.

Flyby Attack The sprite swarm can begin a move action and make an attack or take any other standard action at any point during the move, then continue moving, instead of taking the action

before or after moving. The sprite swarm still cannot move more than its fly speed in the round that it makes a flyby attack.

Mob Mentality As long as a sprite swarm has at least 10 hit points, it retains its Intelligence score and can act accordingly. Even so, it cannot be targeted by mind-affecting spells or effects that target a single creature. If its hit points fall below 10, the swarm is considered mindless as the individual creatures within begin to panic.

Swarm A sprite swarm is made up of thousands of tiny fey creatures. Swarms are immune to critical hits and take only half damage from slashing and piercing weapons. Reducing a swarm to 0 hit points or less causes it to break up; a swarm can never be staggered or dying. Swarms are immune to spells that target one or more specific individuals, but take half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, like the *burning hands* spell. Swarms deal automatic damage to any creature whose space they occupy at the end of their move with no attack roll needed.

10. CHOCOLATE MOUNTAIN PASS ENTRANCE (CR 6; XP 2,400)

The high region through which this small pass runs is called Chocolate Mountain by the eccentric locals, due to the natural bronze deposits and copper salts in the area. Water run-off dissolves these materials, which stain exposed boulders and limestone a dark, chocolate brown. Iron and magnesium deposits in the stones create streaks of red and light gray, making some of the boulders look like ice cream sundaes.

The PCs travel along the road for an hour or two before they reach the area where the troll has taken up residence.

Just beyond a grouping of large boulders, you see a clearing, enclosed in walls of exposed limestone. Standing in the middle of the clearing is a gigantic, brutish-looking humanoid that cannot be mistaken for anything other than a troll. Snot rolls down the monster's face in big globs, and greasy, spaghetti-like hair hangs over his beady eyes. Sausage fingers with

nails full of dirt and grime clench a large club. He doesn't seem to have seen you as he stands listening to a cloaked figure.

It is impossible to hear what the cloaked figure is saying from the distance where the PCs first see the troll. The figure finishes talking to the troll and turns toward the PCs and they can see that she appears to be a woman with thick horns growing from her head and long pale ears. If the PCs have visited the Chocolate Fountain Eatery, the woman's green eyes seem very familiar.

This is, of course, Yaldira. The PCs recognize her right away, based on the training they all received from the Zekerian Order. As she moves toward the PCs and away from the troll, she resumes her illusory disguise and her appearance shifts from Yaldira into Dira, the noble elf from the Chocolate Fountain Eatery.

If the PCs succeed on a **Stealth** check against **Perception** checks by both Yaldira and the troll, they can avoid being seen. If they fail, Yaldira uses her *invisibility* and leaves the area, first heading west before doubling back and returning to the Eatery.

Creatures: Mountain trolls are extremely dangerous, but they are also very dimwitted. It takes the troll a full round to comprehend what is happening and react to the PCs' presence. He also will not move more than 30 feet outside of the canyon, because Yaldira has ordered him not to follow anyone back toward town. Yaldira knows that if the troll gets too close to the heart of Threll, the king would be forced to respond more quickly and send troops who can more easily deal with the brute. His orders do not prevent him from using his "pets" to deal with interlopers, though.

Impress on the players that only much stronger adventurers have a chance of defeating the troll in combat. If they are seen, the heroes



have one round to run from the troll before he orders his lion and aurochs to attack. Persuade the PCs to do a full run away from the canyon (a character in light, medium, or no armor can move up to four times her speed as a full-round action; a character in heavy armor can move up to three times her speed), either back toward town or farther into pass. This will put enough distance between the PCs and the troll, so they can deal with the lion and the aurochs.

Facing the two large animals at the same time is still a challenge, however. PCs who can stay hidden have a chance to deal with each animal, one at a time, instead.

If the PCs remain unseen, the troll waits for Yaldira to leave, then calls the two animals to him and sends them along the road to the west, telling them to “guard.” It’s clear that they are meant to attack anyone coming up the road. The

PCs are the only ones who can keep the animals from hurting someone. If they can sneak past the troll and move farther into the mountains, they can deal with the animals without alerting the troll. This is much easier to do if they get the *potions of invisibility* from Smoke.

If the PCs don’t have the potions, they can try to simply run past the troll. By succeeding on another **Stealth** check, they can surprise the troll and run right past him before he has a chance to react. If the troll notices them, he grabs for the first PC who runs by. The PC can avoid his grasp with either an **Escape Artist** or **Acrobatics** check (DC 24). Each of the other PCs can give this character a +2 bonus by shouting or doing something to distract the troll as they are running through the clearing.

On the other side of the clearing, the PCs can move into the mountains. They encounter the



mountain lion, first. If they do not succeed on a DC 22 **Perception** check, the mountain lion gets one surprise round to attack. It pounces toward the closest player, beginning a charge attack that will allow it to attack with its bite and claws during the first full round of combat.

The noise of the mountain lion attack provokes the mountain aurochs, who is farther down in the canyon. The mountain aurochs takes 6 rounds to reach the players. If they finish with the mountain lion first, they can hear the aurochs' pounding hoof beats and have time to prepare. If the players defeat both mountain creatures reward them with 2,000 XP.

Once the animals are dealt with, the PCs can return to Bakewell Tart and confront Yaldira. If they ran farther into the pass, they must sneak or run past the troll again to get back into town. Discourage the players from entering combat with the troll. The PCs need to force Yaldira to send the troll away.

LION, MOUNTAIN (CAT, GREAT)

CR 3

XP 800^{TOHC}

Hit Points 26

Initiative +4

Speed 50 ft.

Senses low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +10

DEFENSE

Armor Class 16, touch 14, flat-footed 12

Fortitude Save +6, Reflex Save +8, Will Save +2

OFFENSE

Melee bite +7 (1d6+3 plus grab), 2 claws +7 (1d4+3 plus grab)

Special Attacks pounce, rake (2 claws +7, 1d4+3)

STATISTICS

STR +3, DEX +4, CON +2, INT -4, WIS +, CHA -2

Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Spirited Runner, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +12, Climb +7, Perception +10, Stealth +8 (+16 in heavy undergrowth or tall grass)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Grab A target struck by the lion's claw or bite attack is grappled (or grabbed). The target can't move from its current square on its next turn, loses its DEX

mod to AC, and takes a -2 penalty on attack rolls. The lion cannot grab more than one creature at a time. When it grabs a creature, it can only make attacks against that creature.

Pounce When a mountain lion makes a charge attack, it can make a full attack with its bite and claws (including its rake attacks).

Rake If a mountain lion begins its turn with a grabbed foe in its clutches, it can make a single bite or claw attack, plus 2 extra claw attacks.

MOUNTAIN AUROCHS

CR 4

XP 1,200^{ROTRLAE}

Hit Points 34 (3d8+21)

Initiative +1

Speed 40 ft.

Senses low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +11

DEFENSE

Armor Class 18, touch 9, flat-footed 17

Fortitude Save +10, Reflex Save +4, Will Save +3

OFFENSE

Melee gore +10 (1d10+15)

Special Attacks stampede, trample (2d8+15, DC 21)

STATISTICS

STR +10, DEX +1, CON +7, INT -4, WIS +2, CHA -1

Feats Altitude Affinity, Endurance, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Perception +11

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Stampede A stampede occurs if three or more creatures with stampede succeed a trample attack while remaining adjacent to each other. While stampeding, the creatures can trample foes of their size or smaller, and the trample's save DC increases by +2. (Note that the troll's aurochs cannot use this ability by itself.)

Trample As a full-round action, a mountain aurochs can move through an opponent's square, dealing slam damage plus 1 1/2 times its STR (2d8+15) to the target. Targets of a trample can attempt to avoid the trampling creature and receive a DC 21 Reflex save to take half damage. A trampling creature can move through multiple targets' squares, but can only deal trampling damage to each target once per round, no matter how many times its movement takes it over the same creature.

TROLL, MOUNTAIN

CR 14

XP 38,400^{LotLK}

Hit Points 207; regeneration 10 (acid or fire)

Initiative +1

Speed 40 ft., burrow 10 ft., climb 40 ft.

Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent;

Perception +15

DEFENSE

Armor Class 29, touch 9, flat-footed 28

Fortitude Save +18, **Reflex Save** +7, **Will Save** +15

OFFENSE

Melee bite +24 (2d10+13), 2 claws +24 (2d6+13)

Ranged rock +13/+8/+3 (2d8+19)

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 2d6+13), rock throwing (120 ft.)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +13)

At will—*stone shape*

3/day—*spike stones* (DC 13), *stone tell*

1/day—*earthquake* (DC 17), *flesh to stone* (DC 15),
summon monster VIII (earth elemental only)

STATISTICS

STR +13, **DEX** +1, **CON** +7, **INT** -2, **WIS** +3, **CHA** -1

Feats Awesome Blow, Deadly Aim, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Iron Will, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Vital Strike

Skills Climb +33, Perception +15

Languages Giant

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Regeneration Trolls are notoriously difficult to kill.

Mountain trolls heal 10 points of damage each round and cannot die as long as their regeneration still functions (though they still fall unconscious when their hit points drop below 0). If the troll takes damage from acid or fire, its regeneration ceases to function for the next round. During that round, the troll does not heal any damage and can die normally.

Stubborn A mountain troll gains a +4 racial bonus on all Will saving throws. In addition, if the troll fails a saving throw against a charm or compulsion effect, it can immediately attempt a second saving throw against the same effect on the next round to end the duration of the effect early.

11. CONFRONTATION WITH YALDIRA (CR 5; XP 1,600)

After the PCs have discovered Yaldira is conspiring with the troll, they must return to the eatery to confront her. When the PCs arrive at the Chocolate Fountain, they find that there

are no customers, but Yaldira is there, still wearing her “Dira” disguise.

She greets the PCs with her usual lack of enthusiasm. When they accuse her of being the villainous forlarren, she knows she has been discovered and drops her disguise. She sneers at the PCs.

“Let me guess, King Ambrose sent you. I’m tired of him ruining my plans! I may not have been able to stop you from making these miserable people happy again but without me, you will never get rid of that troll. But enough of this. You won’t be returning to the troll or poor, pathetic Ambrose.” Without further warning, she attacks.

Creatures: Yaldira is the only enemy in this fight, but she is far from helpless against the PCs. If they remained hidden from Yaldira during her meeting with the troll, the PCs manage to catch her off guard and the battle can begin as usual, with no surprise round. If Yaldira saw them on the trail, she is waiting for them to return, and gets a surprise round to take one action before the PCs can do anything.

If she is reduced to 6 hit points or fewer, Yaldira she takes one of her *potions of cure light wounds* and then attempts to surrender. She drops her weapon and says “Stop, just stop. I don’t want to die. I will take you to the troll and tell him to clear the pass. Just don’t hurt me anymore.” A DC 10 **Sense Motive** check reveals that these words from her are truthful.

Yaldira lets the PCs escort her to the mountain pass, where she speaks sternly to the creature in the language of giants, sending him away. The forlarren also admits to stealing from some of the shop owners, doing mischief, and bringing other creatures to the area to cause havoc. However, she does not know anything about the missing cats, except that she was glad the event caused so much trouble in town.

Once she releases the troll, if the PCs have not restrained her, Yaldira becomes invisible and moves out of the PCs' reach before using her power to *plane shift* into the Fey Realms and escape. Even if the PCs have restrained her, she attempts to escape at the first opportunity, waiting until the PCs' attention is elsewhere. Clever PCs might be able to hold her long enough to deliver her to the King's Guard in Solaerin, but the resourceful fey woman can still escape to become a thorn in the heroes' sides.

Reward the PCs 1,600 XP for defeating Yaldira, even if she escapes. If the PCs return to Brother Buck at the church to notify him that they have cleared the pass, they can claim the 1,000 gold pieces he offered and earn an additional reward of 1,500 XP.

YALDIRA

CR 5

XP 1,600

Unseelie forlarren fighter 1/wizard (evoker) 2
(*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2, Advanced Bestiary*)

Hit Points 32

Speed 30 ft.

Initiative +9

Senses low-light vision; unseelie sight; **Perception** +13

DEFENSE

Armor Class 18, touch 15, flat-footed 13

Fortitude Save +3, **Reflex Save** +9, **Will Save** +8

DR 5/cold iron or silver; **Resist** cold 5

Weaknesses remorse (DC 15, nauseated for 1d6 rds)

OFFENSE

Melee (standard action) +1 longsword +8 (1d8+3/19-20)

Melee (standard action) 2 claws +4 (1d6+1 plus unseelie taint)

Special Attacks intense spells (+1 damage), unseelie taint

Spell-like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +4)

At Will—*invisibility*

3/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 10), *heat metal* (DC 12), *silent image* (DC 11)

1/day—*alter self*, *darkness*, *magic mouth* (DC 12), *plane shift* (self only, to and from fey realms only), *sleep* (DC 11)

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd;

concentration +3)

4/day—*force missile* (1d4+1)

Evoker Spells Prepared (CL 2nd; concentration +3)

1st—*burning hands* (DC 12), *magic missile* (x2),

obscuring mist

o (at will)—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost*

Opposition Schools Abjuration, Illusion

STATISTICS

STR +2, **DEX** +5, **CON** +0, **INT** +1, **WIS** +1, **CHA** +0

Feats Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Acrobatics +14, Bluff +2, Diplomacy +2, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (planes) +6, Linguistics +2, Perception +13, Sense Motive +6, Spellcraft +7, Stealth +18, Survival +5

Special Qualities arcane bond (+1 longsword), faerie walk, fey blood, unseelie pact

Languages Common, Elven, Giant, Sylvan

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Faerie Walk When in a natural environment, unseelie fey can use a full-round action to transport themselves into the Fey Realms for up to 7 rounds. While there, they behave as though under the effect of an *ethereal jaunt* spell. They can see and hear things on the Material Plane up to 60 feet away, but also can move through solid objects and move in any direction (even up or down at half speed). Returning to the Material Plane is a free action.

Fey Blood Unseelie creatures are treated as fey for the purposes of effects that target that type.

Remorse Whenever a forlarren kills a living creature, it must make a DC 15 Will save to avoid becoming overwhelmed with remorse. If it fails this save, the forlarren becomes nauseated for 1d6 rounds. This is a mind-affecting effect.

Unseelie Taint The touch or natural attacks of unseelie creatures can pass on a curse that turns its victims toward evil. For the purpose of this adventure, this curse only affects other fey and animals. Animals affected by this curse count as fey for effects that target that type. The details on the curse itself are presented in *Advanced Bestiary*.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Capturing Yaldira, or even just driving her out of town, ends the vile woman's schemes and allows things to get back to normal in Bakewell Tart. Allow the PCs any time they need to wrap up loose ends and resolve any of the quests they have started.

When the PCs have finished ensuring the happiness of the townsfolk, they can return to Solaerin and report to King Ambrose I that they have alleviated the townspeople's problems. He thanks them for their fine service to Threll. The PCs may also report on Yaldira's involvement, as well as her escape, if they could not bring her with them. If she did escape, the scribes of the Zekerian Order record all the information from the PCs about Yaldira and then send knights out to the pass and the eatery to look for any other clues she may have left as to her whereabouts. The king rewards the PCs with *potions of cure light wounds* (1 per PC), a *scroll of mage armor*, and an emerald worth 600 gold pieces.

The king insists on a celebration. His court and the nymph Queen Pyrozah's servants put on a grand feast in honor of the adventurers. The food and drink is heavenly. There is much dancing and singing. In all the merriment though, whispers of where they will find Yaldira next and what harm she may cause wind through the evening's revelry like a black vine.

Indeed, the people of Threll and Feyweald have every right to fear as Yaldira's thirst for revenge grows. There are powerful, dark forces awakening on the continent of Terrallien, and Yaldira has already shown that she is willing to swear allegiance to such evil in her search for power.

As the night dwindles, though, the King takes the adventurers aside and confides in them that dark rumors from the agents of the



crown continue in earnest. Other areas of the kingdom are experiencing unrest and the King fears the adventurers' work is not over, yet. Only courageous heroes can shed the light of goodness to fend off the looming darkness that threatens the kingdom so that the people of Threll can enjoy harmony and goodwill.

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APPENDIX 1: PLAYER HANDOUTS

LAYNA AT THE PUB.
 SOMEONE'S STEALING HER
 ONIONS.

CAIN THE CARPENTER.
 CAN'T GET WILLOW ROOT.

JAVA THE COBBLER.
 MISSING A SHIPMENT OF BERRIES.

SMOKE AT THE POTIONS
SHOP.

NEEDS SOMETHING FROM THE
OLD WILLOW TREE.

BREE THE BAKER.
CAN'T MAKE MAPLE SYRUP.

SCHOOL CHILDREN CLAIM THERE
ARE GOBLINS AT THE LAKE
BOTHERING PEOPLE.

BROTHER BUCK AT CHURCH.
PARISHONERS CAN'T GET
THROUGH THE PASS TO ATTEND
SERVICES.

Stealthy as a shadow
in the dead of night.
Cunning and
affectionate, even
though I bite.
Curiosity is my mortal
enemy,
But I am too swift
for death to catch
me.
What am I?

I have a mouth but have
no tongue
I'm full of air though I
have no lungs
I'm significant although
I'm hollow
I have a neck yet cannot
swallow
What am I?

Small wise beings are better than small
fools
Especially when they are so good with
tools
The fey be gone, yet the powers stay
Beware of their tricks and outrageous
play
Who am I?

Deep, dark, underground,
This is where I'll be found.
Yet when I see the light of
day,
I reflect the sun every which
way.
Cut me quick and I improve,
A gift of nobility to behoove.
What am I?

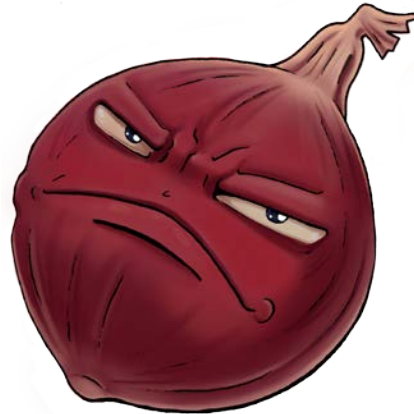
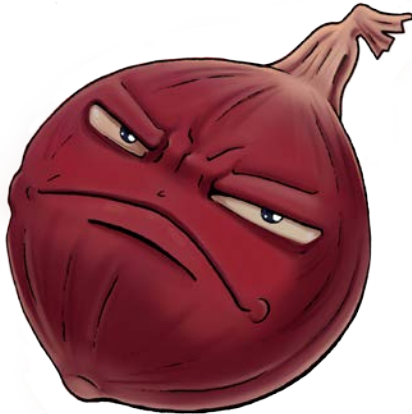






APPENDIX 2: MEMORY GAME





APPENDIX 3: PURSUIT DECK

WILLOW BRANCHES	DIVOT IN THE MEADOW	MOSSY BARK
<i>"Look! I'm a Monkey"</i> ACROBATICS DC 16	<i>"Jumping monkey."</i> ACROBATICS DC 15	<i>"This must be the North side of the tree."</i> KNOWLEDGE [NATURE] DC 10
<i>"I don't think swinging on these is safe."</i> CLIMB DC 13	<i>"Look! I see a hole!"</i> SURVIVAL DC 10	<i>"I can parkour on this green stuff!"</i> ACROBATICS DC 18
<i>"Accio Branch!"</i> CAST MAGE HAND.	<i>"Avoid a face plant."</i> REFLEX SAVE DC 11	<i>"Automatic success."</i> CAST GUIDANCE.
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TALL GRASSES	BEEES AND BUTTERFLIES	ALONG THE WATER
<i>"Step sensibly."</i> ACROBATICS DC 15	<i>"Just ignore them."</i> FORTITUDE SAVE DC 12	<i>"Wobble wobble, don't fall in!"</i> ACROBATICS DC 10
<i>"Woah, that tickles!"</i> ESCAPE ARTIST DC 11	<i>"We don't want your honey!"</i> HANDLE ANIMAL DC 15	<i>"I can swim!"</i> SWIM DC 16
<i>"Part the grasses."</i> CAST PRESTIDIGITATION.	<i>"No stings for me!"</i> CAST TOUCH OF FATIGUE.	<i>"Push through it."</i> FORTITUDE SAVE DC 12
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PUDDLES AND SLIPPERY ROCKS

"Hurdle across."
ACROBATICS DC 14

"Jack be nimble!"
REFLEX SAVE DC 16

"Walk on water."
CAST PRESTIDIGITATION

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OBSTRUCTED PATHWAY

"Vault over."
ACROBATICS DC 10

"Squeeze through and under."
ESCAPE ARTIST DC 12

"Just avoid it."
SURVIVAL DC 14

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MANY ROOTS

"Careful footing."
ACROBATICS DC 12

"Here's the path!"
PERCEPTION DC 15

"I command thee!"
CAST COMMAND.

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SWAMP AREA

"Oh, look! Dry land!"
PERCEPTION DC 13

"Hold your breath."
WILL SAVE 10

"Water into ice!"
CAST RAY OF FROST.

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SNAKE IN THE TREE

"I'm not scared!"
BULL RUSH CMD 15

"Snake wrestler."
STRENGTH DC 12

"Can't see me!"
STEALTH DC 14

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MONKEY UP A TREE

"I'm a spider monkey!"
ACROBATICS DC 16

"I'm a gibbon!"
CLIMB DC 13

"I'm a tamarin!"
SURVIVAL DC 11

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APPENDIX 4: SOCIAL BATTLE DECK

STATE YOUR CASE

Opening Remarks LINGUISTICS DC 20
The Argument DIPLOMACY DC 14
Cross Examination INTIMIDATE DC 17

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PARLAY

The Accords DIPLOMACY DC 16
Card Up My Sleeve SLEIGHT OF HAND DC 19
Silver Tongue LINGUISTICS DC 13

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DUEL OF WITS

Book Smarts INTELLIGENCE DC 13
Street Smarts WISDOM DC 13
Learned KNOWLEDGE (ANY) DC 17

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FABLES

The Moral Of The Story KNOWLEDGE (HISTORY) DC 14
Look Closely, You'll Learn PERCEPTION DC 20
It Is All In The Storytelling PERFORM DC 17

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FAWNING

Flattery Will Get You Everywhere CHARISMA DC 11
Imitation Is The Highest Form Of Flattery DISGUISE DC 14
Anything You Can Do, I Can Do Better PERFORM DC 17

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VOLLEY

I'm Rubber ACROBATICS DC 17
You're Glue CMB 16
Whatever I Say LINGUISTICS DC 19

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SAY IT, DON'T SPRAY IT

Listen Up BLUFF DC 13
Stop Yelling INTIMIDATE DC 15
Ugh, Spit CAST DRENCH

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FANCY INSULT

I Bite My Thumb At You INTIMIDATE DC 16
Avoidance STEALTH DC 18
Pray You Stand Farther From Me CAST PRESTIDIGITATION

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ACQUAINTANCE

Friends Forever
DIPLOMACY DC 14

Social Butterfly
CHARISMA DC 11

Sunshine On A Rainy Day
CAST FLARE

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OSTENTATIOUS

Pretentious
KNOWLEDGE (ANY) DC 13

Show Off
PERFORM DC 15

Grandiose
BLUFF DC 17

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NOTHING BEATS HONESTY

To Blave
BLUFF DC 17

No Legacy Is So Rich As Honesty
APPRAISE DC 19

Truth Is Stranger Than Fiction
PERFORM DC 15

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KNOW IT ALL

Actually...
KNOWLEDGE (ANY) DC 16

I Do This For A Living
PROFESSION DC 13

Don't Question Me, Boy
INTIMIDATE DC 19

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MAGIC 8 BALL

As I See It, Yes
KNOWLEDGE (PLANES) DC 13

Ask Again Later
BLUFF DC 17

Outlook Not So Clear
PERCEPTION DC 20

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I AM MEATY, HEAR ME ROAR

Terrorize
INTIMIDATE DC 19

Bully
STRENGTH DC 13

Endure
FORTITUDE SAVE

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LET US MAKE A DEAL

Barter and Trade
APPRAISE DC 15

Trick or Treat
BLUFF DC 18

You Know You Want To
CAST ENHANCED DIPLOMACY

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WHAT DO YOU HAVE TO LOSE?

Depends On The Cost
APPRAISE DC 12

You Make A Good Point
DIPLOMACY DC 16

Bribery For The Win
INTIMIDATE DC 21

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WELL LIKED

Well Educated
KNOWLEDGE (LOCAL) DC 14

Well Spoken
DIPLOMACY DC 16

Well Groomed
CHARISMA DC 11

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KEEPING YOUR WORD

Manners, My Dear
CHARISMA DC 13

Loyal as a Dog
DIPLOMACY DC 17

No One Will Know
BLUFF DC 21

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TWO FACED BACKSTABBER

A Secret Is Best Kept Alone
DIPLOMACY DC 12

You Can Tell Me Anything
SENSE MOTIVE DC 14

I've Never Said Anything,
Promise
BLUFF DC 20

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REBUTTAL

Smooth Talker
LINGUIST DC 16

Use Your Head
STRENGTH DC 11

Whisper In My Ear
CAST MESSAGE

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TRUSTWORTHY

I Can Sell Ice To Ice Elementals
BLUFF DC 21

I Have The Face Of An Angel
CHARISMA DC 13

Trust Me, I Can Save You
HEAL DC 17

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EMBELLISH

Big Fish and Tall Tale
PERFORM DC 16

A Best Seller
DIPLOMACY DC 19

Scary Stories
CAST GHOST SOUNDS

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NOW YOU SEE ME, NOW YOU DON'T!

Magic Trick
SLEIGHT OF HAND DC 16

Do You See Me Now?
STEALTH DC 20

Why Yes, I've Always Had This
Mustache
DISGUISE DC 19

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CLOSING ARGUMENT

Safer To Take, Than To Beg
SLEIGHT OF HAND DC 18

But I'll Do Anything
SURVIVAL DC 15

Ah, Too Slow
CAST DAZE

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APPENDIX 5: QUEST CARDS

AGREE TO TERMS

Are You Sure?

SENSE MOTIVE DC 17

This Is The Better Deal

INTELLIGENCE DC 12

This Is The Contract?

CAST READ MAGIC

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DEFEAT THE BOAR IN COMBAT

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Apple Market

LIMITATIONS

200 lb boar

LOCATION

Maple Trees

REWARDS

50 gp; 600 XP

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COLLECT QUILLS

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Hardware Store

LIMITATIONS

Max 20 per goose

LOCATION

Lake

REWARDS

1 sp per quill; 600 XP

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SKIPPING ROCKS OR DEFEAT GOBLINS

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

pebbles (3 each)

LIMITATIONS

Must return in 2 minutes

LOCATION

Lake

REWARDS

Fish; 600 XP (plus possible 50 XP per PC)

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FISH (OPTIONAL)

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

pseudodragon

LIMITATIONS

4 fish at a time

LOCATION

Lake

REWARDS

Fish; 50 XP per fish

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COLLECT RED MAPLE LEAVES

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Brownie

LIMITATIONS

none

LOCATION

Fairy Ring

REWARDS

toadstool vest, mushrooms; 400 XP

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GET ONIONS BACK

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Pseudodragon Garden

LIMITATIONS

none

LOCATION

Garden

REWARDS

Two semi-precious stones worth 100 gp each; 400 XP

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DEFEAT GOPHER (MEMORY GAME/COMBAT)

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Pseudodragon Garden

LIMITATIONS

none

LOCATION

Garden

REWARDS

onions, garlic, marigolds, leeks; 600 XP

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DEFEAT RAT SWARM IN CAVES IN COMBAT

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Notify svirfneblin

LIMITATIONS

none

LOCATION

Underground Cave

REWARDS

Ruby worth 500 gp; 600 XP

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RETURN THE CATS AND/OR BRING IN THE CAT THIEF

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Jelly Jail Jake

LIMITATIONS

none

LOCATION

Jelly Jail

REWARDS

500 gp; 400 XP

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DEFEAT VEGEPYGMY IN COMBAT

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

None

LIMITATIONS

None

LOCATION

Underground Cave

REWARDS

500 gp worth of gems; 400 XP

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CHASE WEASEL AWAY

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

None

LIMITATIONS

Chase combat

LOCATION

Willow Tree, Northside of Lake

REWARDS

Willow switches, bark, roots, and
willow sap; 600 XP

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TELL AN ADVENTURING STORY TO BROTHER BUCK

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Brother Buck

LIMITATIONS

none

LOCATION

Chili Church

REWARDS

50 XP each

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BRING MUSHROOMS TO POTION SHOP

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Alchemist Smoke

LIMITATIONS

limit 25 mushrooms

LOCATION

Fairy Ring

REWARDS

5 gp per mushroom; 100 XP

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BRING WILLOW SAP AND BARK TO POTION SHOP

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Smoke the Alchemist

LIMITATIONS

limit 1 time

LOCATION

Willow Tree, Northside of Lake

REWARDS

175 gp; 100 XP

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COLLECT MAPLE SAP

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Bree's Bread and Bakery

LIMITATIONS

2 lbs. per PC

LOCATION

Maple Trees

REWARDS

5 gp per 1-lb bucket of maple sap;
50 XP each

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ONIONS FOR THE ICEBERG INN AND PUB

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Iceberg Inn and Pub

LIMITATIONS

none

LOCATION

Pseudodragon Garden

REWARDS

5 gp each in credit at the hardware store, free room and board, and drinks; 200 XP

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SELL WILLOW BRANCH BUNDLES TO HARDWARE STORE

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Hardware Store

LIMITATIONS

none

LOCATION

Willow Tree, Northside of Lake

REWARDS

1 gp per bundle

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OBTAIN BERRIES

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Java at Tangerine Taylor and Cobbler

LIMITATIONS

none

LOCATION

signpost headed out of town

REWARDS

15 gp per bagful; 200 XP

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DIG OUT WILLOW ROOT

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Chestnut Carpenters

LIMITATIONS

Need Shovel for Roots

LOCATION

Willow Tree, Northside of Lake

REWARDS

150 gp; 200 XP

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DISTRACT FAUN (SOCIAL COMBAT)

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

none

LIMITATIONS

none

LOCATION

Crossroads north of town

REWARDS

Berries, 400 gp; 2,540 XP

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OBTAIN INVISIBILITY POTION

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

none

LIMITATIONS

Must accept mission from Brother Buck

LOCATION

Potion Shop

REWARDS

Invisibility Potion each

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DEFEAT MOUNTAIN LION

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

None

LIMITATIONS

None

LOCATION

Mountain Pass

REWARDS

800 XP

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DEFEAT MOUNTAIN AUROCHS

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

None

LIMITATIONS

None

LOCATION

Mountain Pass

REWARDS

1,200 XP

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OPEN THE MOUNTAIN PASS

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Report to Brother Buck

LIMITATIONS

Troll is too powerful, need a work around

LOCATION

Mountain Pass

REWARDS

1,000 gp; 1,500 XP

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DEFEAT YALDIRA

DELIVER ITEM(S) TO

Notify King Ambrose I

LIMITATIONS

none

LOCATION

Mountain Pass

REWARDS

potions of cure light wounds (1 per PC), *scroll of mage armor*, emerald (600 gp); 1,600 XP

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APPENDIX 6: TREASURE CARDS



TOADSTOOL VEST

Aura faint abjuration; **CL** 5th
Slot chest; **Price** 500 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Fleshy mushroom caps and inverted fungus gills are woven together to create an extraordinarily thick, warm vest which is smooth and velvety to the touch. When the vest is compressed, it recoils immediately, granting the wearer a damage resistance of 5 from bludgeoning weapons. Magic preserves the toadstools from decay and damage.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *defending glyph*^{Deep Magic}; **Cost** 250 gp

ZEKERIAN AMULET

Aura faint conjuration (healing); **CL** 3rd
Slot neck; **Price** 750 gp; **Weight** —

DESCRIPTION

The image of a shooting star crossing a night sky inscribes a shield shaped silver amulet.

Once per day, as a free action, the amulet's wearer can draw power from the amulet to heal 1d8+1 points of damage, as though she had received a *cure light wounds* spell. As part of her alliance with Threll, Nymph Queen Pryozha has imbued the Order's amulets with living magic, such that their healing power increases over time, granting healing as a *cure* spell cast by a cleric of the PCs' level (2d8+3 points of healing at 3rd level; 3d8+5, at 5th; etc.).

Alternatively, if the wearer is reduced to 0 or fewer hit points and has not yet used the amulet that day, the magic activates automatically as an immediate action. If the healing is enough to restore the wearer to 1 or more hit points, she remains conscious, does not fall prone, and can otherwise act normally on her next turn.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *cure light wounds*; **Cost** 375 gp

WILLOW SWITCH

Type light melee

Damage 1d2x2 nonlethal slashing (Medium; 1 Small)

Range —

Weight 1/2 lb.



Character Sheet

CHARACTER NAME

GENDER

ALIGNMENT

LEVEL

PLAYER

CLASS

RACE

XP

abilities

ABILITY NAME	BASE SCORE	ABILITY MODIFIER
STR STRENGTH		
DEX DEXTERITY		
CON CONSTITUTION		
INT INTELLIGENCE		
WIS WISDOM		
CHA CHARISMA		
SKILL RANKS	TOTAL	PER LEVEL
HP HIT POINTS	TOTAL	TEMP

saves and attacks

INITIATIVE	TOTAL	=	BASE	+	DEX	+	MISC		
FORTITUDE SAVE (CONSTITUTION)	TOTAL	=	BASE	+	CON	+	MISC		
REFLEX SAVE (DEXTERITY)	TOTAL	=	BASE	+	DEX	+	MISC		
WILL SAVE (WISDOM)	TOTAL	=	BASE	+	WIS	+	MISC		
MELEE ATTACK BONUS	TOTAL	=	BASE	+	STR	+	MISC		
RANGED ATTACK BONUS	TOTAL	=	BASE	+	DEX	+	MISC		
AC ARMOR CLASS	TOTAL	=	ARMOR +SHIELD	+	DEX	+	MISC	+	10
BAB BASE ATTACK			SPEED			CMB	CMD		

feats and abilities

skills

weapons and armor

WEAPON NAME						
WEAPON	ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRIT	DAMAGE TYPE	WEIGHT	PROPERTIES
WEAPON NAME						
WEAPON	ATTACK BONUS	DAMAGE	CRIT	DAMAGE TYPE	WEIGHT	PROPERTIES
ARMOR NAME						
ARMOR	BONUS	TYPE	CHECK PENALTY	SPELL FAILURE	WEIGHT	PROPERTIES
SHIELD NAME						
SHIELD	BONUS	TYPE	CHECK PENALTY	SPELL FAILURE	WEIGHT	PROPERTIES

This image shows a blank sheet of lined paper, likely from a notebook or binder. The paper has a light cream or off-white color. A thick, dark green border runs along the top and sides of the page. At the top left, the words "spells / powers" are written in a stylized, blue, serif font. Below the header, the page is filled with horizontal blue lines, providing space for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page.

character portrait / notes

[illegible]

GP

SP

CP

treasure / notes

ON THE TRAIL OF A VILLAIN!

Trail of the Apprentice

The theft of a mysterious artifact launches a group of heroes on a desperate quest to unmask a hidden foe and stop his plans to unleash a terrible evil upon the world. Only by following clues, getting help from some unlikely sources, and overcoming great challenges will the heroes be able to discover who their enemy is and what plans are unfolding to threaten the good people of Threll. Will their strength, willpower, and talent be enough to win the day?

Trail of the Apprentice is a five-part campaign for 1st- through 5th-level characters, using the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game rules. Designed to provide a series of exciting adventures suitable for all ages, especially new and younger players, this book includes all five adventures, advice sidebars, new rules options for simplified versions of the game, and campaign setting information to help bring the lands of Terrallien to life.

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LEGENDARY BEGINNINGS

Into the Feyweald

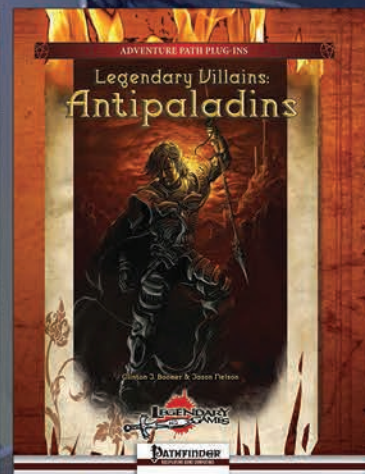
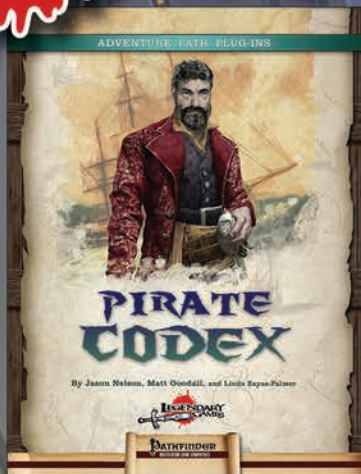
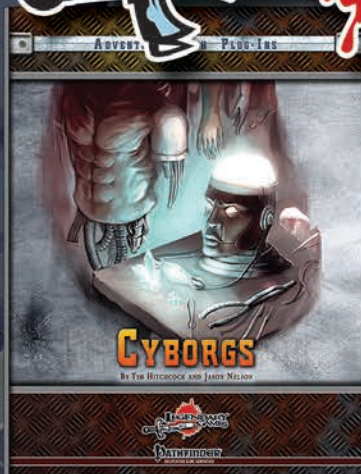
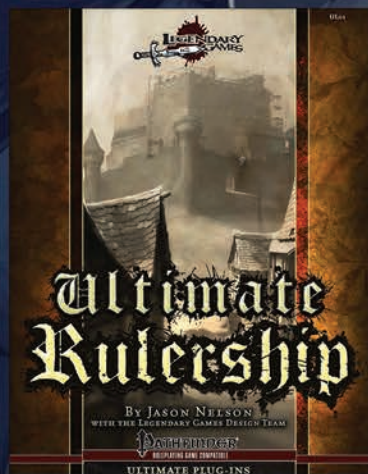
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SOMETHING TERRIBLE IS HAPPENING IN THE FEYWEALD. THE FOREST NESTLED ON THE FINGER OF LAND BETWEEN NORTHRUNNER SOUND AND PEGASUS BAY WAS ONCE A PLACE WHERE THE SPIRITS OF NATURE COULD LIVE APART FROM THRELLISH CIVILIZATION. BUT THE FOREST IS SLOWLY CHANGING. A SICKNESS GROWS AT ITS HEART, CAUSE BY DARK ENERGY FLOWING FROM A WORLD IN ANOTHER PLANE OF EXISTENCE FROM AEVA. ALTHOUGH THE FEYWEALD’S QUEEN DOESN’T KNOW ITS SOURCE, SHE REALIZES THIS EVIL INFLUENCE IS CORRUPTING BOTH THE LAND AND HER PEOPLE.

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5th
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This 1st to 2nd-level adventure is suitable for all ages using the standard *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* or the boxed set for beginners. Check out this 64-page adventure today and **Make Your Game Legendary!**



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Playing D&D Remotely: Virtual Tabletop Software

Showcasing the best learning resources to help you get the most out of Fantasy Grounds and Roll20.

Maintaining safe social distancing doesn't mean you can't still gather your party before venturing forth—taverns can take many forms! Programs such as **Discord**, **Google Hangouts**, **Skype**, and **Zoom**, which are free to download, are great for both voice and video chat.

You can also utilize virtual tabletop platforms such as **Roll20** and

Fantasy Grounds if you still want to use battle maps and minis despite not hanging out around a table. To help players get started with these systems we've tracked down useful resources that teach everything you need to know about the tools and options they provide for better remote play. Stay safe everyone.

FANTASY GROUNDS

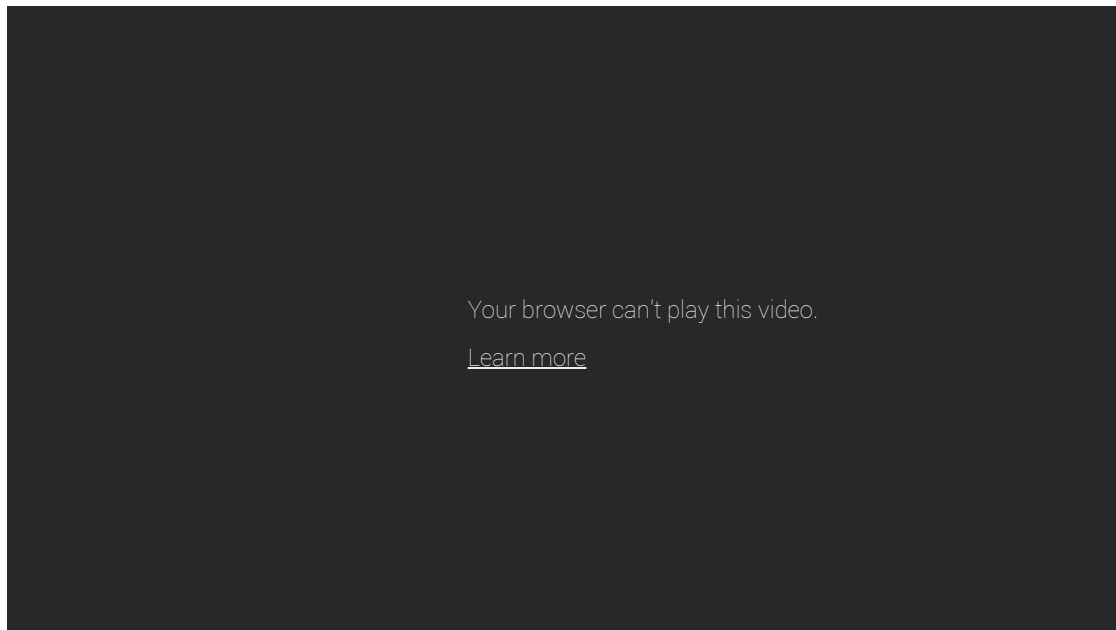
Virtual tabletop system Fantasy Grounds is currently completing an upgrade and its new tools make it easier for Dungeon Masters to connect with their players. Fantasy Grounds Classic is still in operation, with **Fantasy Grounds Unity** now available to download. In order to run Fantasy Grounds, users need a Windows or Mac PC (a Linux version of the software is in the works and will be rolling out soon).

Doug Davison, President of SmiteWorks, recommends that new Fantasy Grounds users choose Unity as it's the easiest way for them to get started with the virtual tabletop. Users can find **instructions** and **basic guides** on the Fantasy Grounds website to help them get to grips with the software and Davison himself has added a number of video tutorials to that teaching process. His quick tips include how to host a campaign as a DM and join a campaign as a player, as well basic skills such as importing a map or image, loading modules, creating a character and starting combat.

Your browser can't play this video.

[Learn more](#)

New community manager on the D&D Team, Brandy Camel, has also been showing users how to get the best out of the software. She's joined in her videos by Davison and Marketing Specialist Jen Page as they play a D&D campaign designed to teach people the basics—watch as they create characters and play through *Dragon of Icespire Peak* from the *D&D Essentials Kit*:



Davison also suggests heading to **Fantasy Grounds College** for an interactive learning experience. This fan-run organization has its own Discord channel and runs free classes to train people how to DM and handle everything within the software.

FREE FANTASY GROUNDS MODULE!

Dragon+ readers can download the ENnie-nominated *Legendary Beginnings—A Feast of Flavor* to play on Fantasy Grounds. Legendary Games has made the module free for the life of this issue and you can find more details in our *Best of the DMs Guild* section.

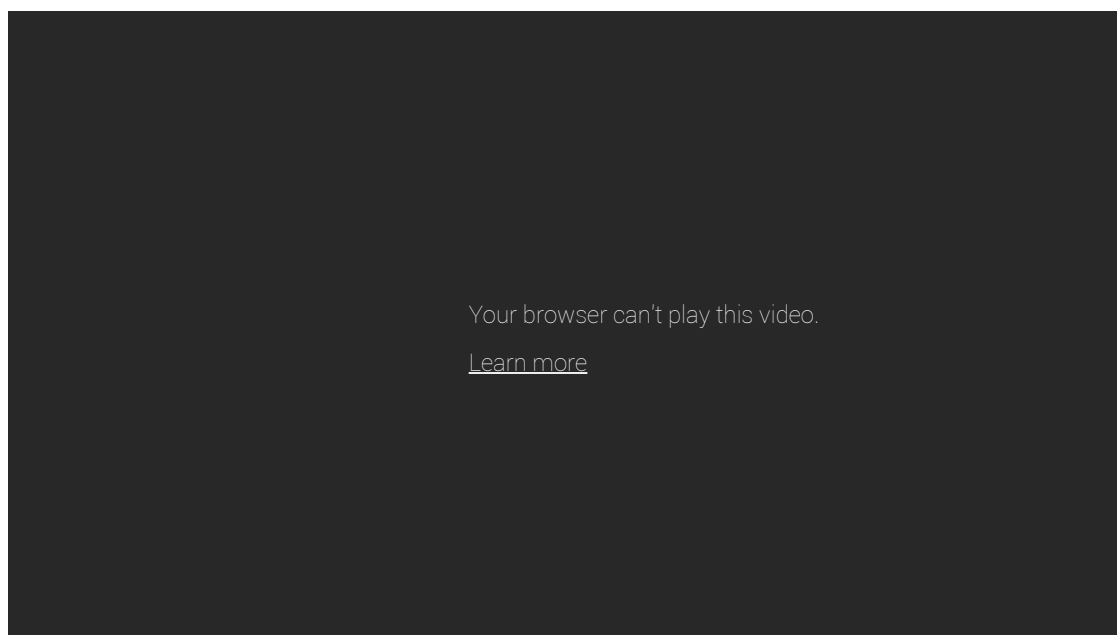
ROLL20

The Roll20 virtual tabletop brings pen-and-paper gaming to the web. Its platform of tools enhances what makes tabletop gaming great: storytelling and camaraderie. And the team at Roll20 have worked

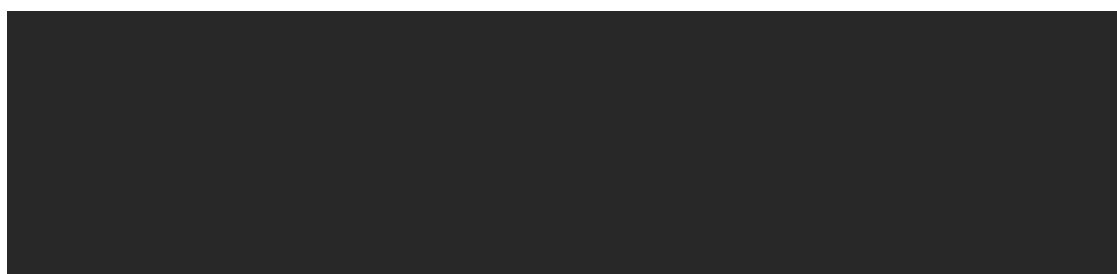
hard to lessen the technical burden for all participants on its platform.

The **Crash Course section** of its “Getting Started” material is a great place for new players to learn the ropes. Its series of videos take players step-by-step through some of our most popular features and you can start off the series and watch them in order by **clicking here**.

Carlos Luna and Victoria Rogers have also started a weekly video series that walks new users through their first steps using Roll20. Their informative but informal discussions so far include subjects as diverse as rolling up characters, using tokens and handouts, and getting the best out of the system’s innovative dynamic lighting tools (which calculate line of sight as tokens are moved across the tabletop and only show players what they can actually see). You can **access the full series here** or begin with episode one below:



Roll20 suggests new users start out by playing its *Lost Mine of Phandelver* conversion, as the module has been designed to walk new players through the system and act as a ‘how to play on Roll20’ guide. You can watch Roll20’s live-play crew tackle *Lost Mine of Phandelver* to get a feel for what the system brings to remote play:



Your browser can't play this video.

[Learn more](#)

The Wizards of the Coast may have retreated to their respective towers for the time being but the *Stay at Home. Play at Home.* program is helping provide safe play without the need to break out your ten-foot poles. As always, the *Basic Rules* for Dungeons & Dragons fifth edition are available for free. **Download the 180-page PDF**, which includes everything you need to play the game: from character creation to tips for Dungeon Masters. D&D Adventurer's League content can also be played and logged from the comfort of your own home. Learn more about how to organize an official Adventurer's League game **here**.

BACK TO TOP

Next Issue: Dragon+ 33

Guest editor Hal Howard joins our windswept trek!



We know it'll be the month of August when we return with the next edition of *Dragon+* but can we convince you to wrap up warm when we do? We'll be taking a deeper dive into the glacial world of *Icwind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden*, including talking to artists Tyler Jacobson and Hydro74 about the amazing covers they've created for that setting!



We also speak with Guest Editor Hal Howard, who has been playing and DMing Dungeons & Dragons since he was in junior high back in 1979/1980. He'll tell us how he got to playtest a section of *Icewind Dale: Rime of the Frostmaiden* before anyone else in the world!

Hal secured his spot on the editorial team thanks to a very generous Extra Life donation and we'll focus on our plans for the 2020 charity drive, all to raise funds for the Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. Will you join **Team D&D** as we try to add to the \$1m raised since 2013 to support sick kids?

There's all this, plus more exclusive previews, all our regulars such as the best of the DMs Guild, another delve into the imposing *Dragon* archive, and much, *much* more!

Stay safe everyone.

(Contents subject to change)



BACK TO TOP



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A big thank you to Greg Tito and everyone involved with the creation of this issue.

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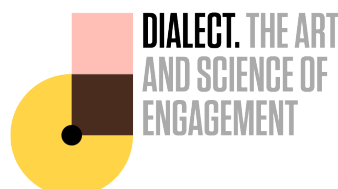
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